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[MISER MARTIN'S TREASURE.]

THE MISER'S HEIR.

CHAPTER VIII.

The wind was high, the window shakes,
With sudden start the miser wakes;
Along the silent room he stalks,
Looks back, and trembles as he walks,
Each look and every bolt he tries,
Is every crev' and corner tries,
Thatope's the cheat with treasure stor'd,
And stands in rapture o'er his hoard.

GAY.

ROGER THORNLIFFE had grown somewhat pale while his uncle had been speaking. He came and stood close by him now, looking at him in the deepest surprise, consternation, and eager curiosity. A malicious smile still curied the old man's lip.

"What would you all say if I told you," cried old Martin, "that I had speculated everywhere in mines, railway shares, and foreign stocks; and that in every case I had come to loss, and grief, and ruin. That this old house and the estate thereto attached are all that remain to me; the estate being worth, as you all well know, only some seven or eight hundred a year, and that so mortgaged that there remains not two hundred a year to live on. What would you all say if I told you that?" repeated old Martin, in a tone of triumph.

Roger's colour came and went upon his clear dark cheek, and his long black eyes flashed with anxiety.

The old man seemed to enjoy his discomfiture. Ethel on her part was pale and anxious at hearing this news.

The reader has been permitted to know something of her heart and feelings, and that she cherished an affection for Harold Harcourt, the son of the ruined squire of Denethor Hall.

She had hoped and expected that her great uncle, who had always been kind to her, would some day or

other provide for her out of his great wealth, so handsomely that she would be enabled to relieve all her fears, and lighten all the cares of the hero of her fancy.

Ethel was one of those generous souls who desire to be rich more for the sake of benefiting others than herself.

It was not only Harold that she wished to enrich. She was the angel of the poor around Greywold Manor, and from her scanty means contributed generously towards their wants.

She had indulged in many dreams for the future, in all of which she had acted as the dispenser of benefits and the friend of those in need.

Now it seemed that poverty was to be her portion for ever, and that she and Harold Harcourt were separated by an impassable gulf, so that Ethel looked as pale and anxious as Roger, though not so agitated.

Old Martin watched their faces and chuckled.

As he did so a comforting conviction sprang up in the mind of Roger that his great uncle was only indulging in a grim jest.

But jest or no, it was evident the old man was displeased with him, doubted him; suspected his debts, and would be extremely likely to disinherit him, should he discover the true state of his finances.

"Only two hundred a year," cried old Martin, striking his claw-like hands one against the other.

"That's to pay for bread, and beef, and beer, coals, and servants' wages henceforth. Clothes we must get as we can! patch up the old ones and so on. And you, Mr. Roger, your fifty pounds a year must be stopped henceforth. You'll have to look after the farms at a bailiff's wages, or you must go to London and get a situation as a copying clerk. When I am dead you may cut down the timber, to help to pay off the mortgage. But even then it won't be more than enough to partially clear it, so that you'll have to live on four hundred a year; or rather on two hundred and fifty, for you must allow your sister there

one hundred and fifty. I am going to make inquiries, and if I find you owe one debt, one single debt, I'll disinherit you entirely."

Roger quailed. One debt! why he owed hundreds of pounds! taking into consideration one hundred to a Jew money-lender, the rent and expensive furniture of some apartments in Jermyn-street, bills for jewellery, tailor's bills, &c., &c.

Supposing his uncle to be possessed of at least two millions of money, and that he was the heir of all that wealth—saving a provision, perhaps, of some twenty or thirty thousand pounds for his sister Ethel. Roger Thornecliffe had, in truth, plunged into a reckless expenditure. Some enemy had been at work with his uncle—some enemy who wished to deprive him of his inheritance.

His thoughts pointed at once towards Benjamin Crook, the lawyer in the neighbouring town. He resolved to go the next morning to Crook's office, to accuse him, bully him, and threaten him. Roger was a very violent young man on occasion.

How should Crook know? that was the question which puzzled him. Then he remembered that the Jew money-lender had been excessively greedy lately after his hundred pounds.

He might have chosen to come to the neighbourhood of Greywold, to seek out Benjamin Crook in the old-fashioned street where his office was situated, in the ancient market town of Kemerton, and then and there to make inquiries, and, perhaps, communications.

That his uncle had lost one farthing he did not believe; that his uncle would find out how much he owed he firmly did believe.

Very desperate was the state of poor Roger's mind as he stood by the old mantel-piece, his glass of claret close to his hand, his old uncle staring at him with his hard pitiless eyes, and the vast inheritance of wealth which he coveted trembling in the balance before him.

His uncle must not find out his debts, that was imperative. Benjamin Crook must be coerced into hold-

ing his tongue—that was absolutely imperative also. Then Mortlake—Mortlake must be consulted,—nay, he must borrow from him, absolutely borrow from him, and pay up the Jew money-dealer; landlord, tailor, jeweller, furniture dealer, everybody to whom he owed a farthing.

Then—how was he to pay Mortlake again?

He glanced at Ethel, and felt convinced that if he could only succeed in making his beautiful sister bestow her hand on the stockbroker, Mortlake would never ask him for the money again.

To Kemerton in the morning, then, and at once to his own chamber to write a letter to Mr. Mortlake, and entreat him to come down to Greywold immediately to consult.

"I suppose you don't owe any debts, Mr. Roger Thorncilfe?" inquired old Martin, with a sneer; "that is, I conjecture that you are not afraid of my making as many inquiries as I choose?"

Roger broke into a forced laugh.

"I am not afraid, of course," said he. "It is not likely that I should be. I should like to know who has been setting you against me, uncle. Some one has, I am certain."

"Somebody has been very wicked, Uncle Martin," said Ethel, coming to the rescue and speaking what she believed to be true. "I am sure dear Roger wouldn't get into debt for the whole world."

"The whole world is a very great bait, my dear," said old Martin, taking his niece's hand between both of his own. "I don't know what a great many of us wouldn't do if we were offered anything so splendid. I am very much afraid that many of us do very bad things for far less wages. Eh, Miss Melville; what is your opinion?"

And he turned towards the ladylike and accomplished little governess of Ethel, who had come to Greywold twelve years before, a pretty young woman of twenty-six, and who was still an attractive and agreeable person.

"I feel inclined to answer," said Miss Melville, "out of the great and Holy Book where we find all rules for our lives and conduct written, but Roger would say, that little Melville, our governess, is fast growing into a canting old maid."

"Indeed, I should say nothing so ungentlemanly, Miss Melville," said Roger, smiling. "You are a hundred times prettier and pleasanter than ten out of every dozen women that one meets, married or single. And we all know you need not remain an old maid unless you choose. Wouldn't Doctor Hillyer give his ears if you would marry him? But tell us what you were going to say. Uncle Martin asked you if you did not think that most of us would do very bad things for far less wages than the bait of the whole world. Is that your opinion?"

"I trust it is not so, Roger," returned Miss Melville, gently. The passage which occurred to me, and which I thought you would consider me canting to quote, is one you have often heard: 'The wages of sin is death.'

A sort of thrill passed through Roger, and a look of gloom came into his large fine eyes.

"Death," he said; but, Miss Melville, we must all die some time or other, whether we are sinful or good. Look at my poor father, who seems to have been a model of all the virtues. What a cruel death he met with in this very house. Was that then the wages of his sin?"

"No," said Miss Melville; "but that was only death of the body."

"Ah, now, you come to matters too high for me," said Roger, seizing his candlestick. "I wish you all good night, for I shall not come down again this evening."

"Don't waste the candles," called out old Martin, sitting up to read and write. "I told Spinette to allow you all to two wax candles each for your rooms. Remember the whole household has to live now on two hundred a year."

And thoroughly did Miser Martin mean what he said.

"My dear young lady," said he, grimly to Miss Melville, "you have just heard me tell my nephew, Roger, that I must deprive him of the fifty pounds a year that I have hitherto allowed him—things are going very badly with us, very badly indeed. You have hitherto, knowing the circumstances under which I was placed (Miser Martin would have found it very difficult to explain what circumstances prevented his allowing a very handsome salary to Miss Melville)—knowing the circumstances under which I was placed," continued Miser Martin, "consented, through love to Ethel, to remain as governess and companion to her at a much lower salary than your merits deserved. But inadequate as that salary has been, my dear," continued the strange old gentleman with an apologetic smile, "I scarcely see how I am to continue it to you. I shall be extremely grieved

to part with you; but can I ask you to remain unpaid?"

"Oh, uncle dear," cried Ethel, vehemently, "you cannot mean that Miss Melville is to leave us. You could not do without her more than myself. When I am away on a visit, who will make your coffee and read the newspaper to you? And how am I to make long country walks all alone? I shall be so miserable without her. If you have really lost all your money, as you say, it would be better to sell the family portraits and the plate, and to pay Miss Melville, than to let her go, it would indeed."

Miss Melville, clever, yet gentle little woman as she was, looked from friend to niece, and from niece to uncle, with a shrewd yet pleasant smile.

"We will say nothing, then, about salary for the present, Mr. Thorncilfe," she said. "I am in no especial want of anything—for I have saved my salary for several years, and I have no poor relations dependent upon me; therefore, we will let this question stand over for six months; by that time, I have no doubt that Mr. Thorncilfe will find that his affairs are not in so bad a condition as he imagines. But if they should be, why, entonces, I do not think I should be able to make up my mind to leave Ethel."

Ethel went and sobbed and clung to her friend. Miser Martin smiled grimly, but not unkindly upon the pair.

"Well," he said, "I suppose you will make that right between yourselves. We shall have to economise—economise—economise," he repeated the word three times, threw up his hands, and chuckled. "Master Roger will have to do without his visits to London. I have never given you more than fifteen pounds a year in your pocket, my dear, and suppose I must continue that to you, Ethel, because you see you will want it for clothes, and, unfortunately, people can't do without clothes." Here Miser Martin sighed exactly as though he had been discussing the horrors of some great social evil. "People will dress," continued Miser Martin, impatiently; "and young ladies like Ethel must have print morning dresses, and stuff walking dresses, and fine flimsy evening dresses, and Heaven knows what besides. And as, my dear, you may still keep your fifteen pounds a year, although it is a very great deal of money!"

"Thank you, uncle," said Ethel, demurely.

"But we shall have to economise," continued Martin Thorncilfe. "If people eat in the morning they must not be asked to stop to lunch, and I shall put Master Roger and the servants—aye, and myself too—upon an allowance with regard to wine and ale. Those who drink ale with their dinner must not have wine after, and vice versa. The servants have always had a great barrel of home-brewed to themselves, and they have gone to it as they liked—that must be put a stop to now. Mr. Roger must draw it for them, or else I will, for Spinette grows more deaf and stupid every day, and, Ethel, my dear, you must not carry away so much milk and flour, in the shape of pudding, to the poor, as you have been in the habit of doing. We must cut and contrive—we must patch our old clothes, and send our old boots to the cobbler."

A smile passed between Miss Melville and Ethel, but it was something of a sad smile. Miser Martin seemed day by day to be developing into new phases of miserliness.

The time might come, perchance, when this strange old man would deny even proper food and firing to his household.

Soon afterwards coffee came in, and then Ethel played and sang a few plaintive old ballads to her uncle, which reminded him of the days of his youth, soothed him, and put him into a pleasant mood.

When they were gone Spinette entered the room with a great bunch of keys, and so much of the family plate as was kept in use during the day she packed into a basket lined with green baize.

Sundry pertinent questions and querulous answers passed between the two old people relative to various economies which had been practised, or neglected, as the case might be, among the four domestics.

The squire of Greywold Manor was sharp in his inquiries touching the expenses of preserving sugar, for Spinette made a large quantity of jam from the produce of the gardens every autumn.

"And that would sell in London—would sell in London well—and you know it, Spinette. I don't see why we shouldn't send up four or five hundred pots to Fortnum and Mason. Couldn't we make twelve or fourteen pounds out of it, eh? And you should have a couple of guineas for your trouble, Spinette, you should, upon my honour!"

His voice had dropped to a confidential whisper, and the strange old gentleman looked up cunningly into the eyes of the ancient housekeeper.

Poor Spinette's grim, seventy-years-old face looked severely down upon that of the miser.

"The jam's made, sir," she said, drily. "Four hundred pots was all that came this year out of the Greywold kitchen garden, and it's wanted for the house, and if it weren't I'd never be a party to helping to make a squire of Greywold Manor, whose ancestors came over with the Conqueror, a petty huxter of apricot or raspberry jam to a London confectioner."

Spinette was the only person on earth who dared speak her mind to the squire of Greywold Manor.

He took her reproach-meekly, wished her "Good-night," and let her depart.

Soon afterwards he mounted the stairs in company with his chamber candlestick, his bunch of keys, and his plate basket.

His room was on the first landing—a grim room—just such an one as one would have imagined his choosing.

A huge four-post bed, with chintz curtains, hiding itself in one corner, a great gaunt oak press, containing his scanty wardrobe; a large table with a flap on which stood a small and ancient looking glass; a painted-wash stand, but furnished with precious ancient ware, the only article of any style or value in the ghostly chamber, for ghostly terrors tawdry was in appearance.

And when old Martin had put down his somewhat dimly burning wax candle upon the table, and having double-locked his door, went groping towards his great clothes press, one might have imagined that one was watching the evolutions of some ghost, who had not lived in the flesh during the last century.

His spindle-shanks covered with grey stockings, his knee breeches, his black velvet skull cap, his adavorous face, his abrunken form, his scatty step in his list slippers, the cowering beam in his eyes when he paused to listen, as though he fancied he had heard the echo of a footprint, or the reverberation of a voice.

Very like a ghost did old Martin look, and now he had approached the clothes press, and had unlocked it with one of the keys from the bunch which Spinette gave him.

A few shabby coats hung against the pegs, there were drawers in which probably lay his scanty stock of flannels and under linens. But it was not these that the miser had come to gloat over.

One more glance across his left shoulder, one more eunning smile, and then Martin put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and drew out a key, a very little key, to the ring of it was attached a chain, and to this chain a small piece of steel, sharpened at the point.

Another stealthy glance over the left shoulder, then Martin Thorncilfe went forward towards his clothes press, and pressed the point of the steel against the wooden lining. Instantly there started out a box, a square, heavy ips box, measuring a yard in length, and half a yard across—a box with rings, and clasps, and bands of iron across it, and about it in every direction. This box stood upon a slide.

Had there been any watcher in the chamber of Mr. Thorncilfe he would so far have seen nothing of this mysterious box; for the light still barat dimly on the table, with the flap where stood the looking glass.

But now old Martin crept across the room, bending under the burden of the great box; with difficulty, and panting and laboured breathing, he placed it upon the table.

Then he inserted the key in the lock, and with a snap the lid sprang back; there was a cover over the box—made of blue cloth—which buttoned down tightly.

The miser unbuttoned this, and there appeared immediately a number of compartments, each one of which was brimful of papers—what kind of papers? Martin Thorncilfe took them out, and held them over by one near the candle.

The light fell full now on the cadaverous face, upon the thin smiling lips, upon the beaming eyes, and then he held the precious papers out—between his eyes and the candle.

Had there been a watcher now anywhere concealed in the room, he might have read the titles upon those papers. One thousand pounds, that was one, only one of those precious notes, yet another and another did Martin Thorncilfe hold up between his eyes and the light, until he had counted out the sum of twenty thousand pounds. After that, he drew out notes of a smaller value, beginning with those of five hundred pounds until he came to those of one hundred pounds—of these last there seemed to be no end.

He counted them off in tens, putting each packet of a thousand pounds by itself, and then handing them one upon another, until at last little packets of a hundred thousand pounds worth of value, each

were arranged all round the table. The notes were large, few were of less value than fifty pounds, the miser counted in a tone which sounded like a low monotonous chant.

He suggested the idea of the old priest of some heathenish faith, who was performing a nightly act of worship to some fetish or false god. At last the counting of the notes was finished.

The sum total was astounding, two millions of pounds sterling! Martin Thorncriff had been two hours and a half counting out this vast sum. He paused now, chuckled, rubbed his hands.

"Nobody knows it," he said, triumphantly. "Nobody knows what's sum I have got here. I have only had it here a month, and some will call me an idiot for losing the interest; but I'm no idiot. I know what I'm about, I hope—aye, and I know what the whole country is about—and I know it's coming to ruin, and republicanism and revolution. Banks won't be safe in another six months. Stocks will be anywhere. Foreign Bonds won't be worth a farthing rustlight. The financial and commercial world is on the eve of a crisis. Very soon there will come a terrible crash, but I shall be safe."

Old Martin chuckled again.

"I told those young simpletons just now—popinjay Roger and my pretty Ethel—I had speculated and lost. It would have been true of me in another six months, I verily believe, if I had not drawn all my fortune out of these swindling companies and tottering banks, and as for the funds, where will the funds be when there comes a revolution and a republic, which is sure to come soon? Yes, England is on the eve of ruin—no doubt on the eve of ruin. Meanwhile I'm safe. Why, if I invested in land, if I bought great estates, they might be confiscated if these fellows got into power. Our landed nobles and gentry won't keep their estates much longer; not they. No, no; Ben Crook may talk about losing interest. Ben Crook is sharp in some things, but not so sharp as Martin Thorncriff. I'd rather trust to my secret box, my hidden spring, and my strong oak chest than to all their swindling banks and companies. Meanwhile, I think I have something else here to count."

He went again to the iron box, touched a spring, and lifted out the compartment or tray which had contained the two millions worth of notes.

Underneath were sundry bags of chamois leather. Martin Thorncriff took them out one by one, untied the strings by which they were fastened, and poured forth their contents.

Each bag was stuffed with gold pieces; some contained fifty, some a hundred, some two hundred sovereigns.

Martin counted them all.

The heap of gold upon the table reminded one of these enormous piles which the croupier sweeps into the bank at a German kassal.

Then old Martin rubbed his hands together.

"There's so much pomp about gold," he said, "so much show and glitter. How much grander all that looks than my notes, and yet its value is comparatively nothing—there are only about two thousand sovereigns in all—and yet it looks worth a king's ransom. But there is yet something else there," and Martin went again to the box; this time he might indeed talk about the glitter and pomp of wealth—for most precious were the jewels that lay under the gold and notes.

It will be remembered that Martin Thorncriff had been a trader in precious stones in Brasil, and it had been one of his whims to retain the most precious of his stock.

He held out now in the light of the solitary wax candle necklaces, crosses, chains, rings, earrings, and bracelets of splendid diamonds, glowing rubies, rich emeralds, and gleaming pearls, as might have made a duchess envious, and a princess sigh.

"Worth another hundred thousand pounds, at least," said old Martin, complacently. "My pretty Ethel, sometimes I think she deserves a little present. Let me see—what I can spare—here's a nice cross, now, pearls set in gold, and a gold chain attached with a clasp. Ah, what a fine emerald there is in that clasp! She might lose it, I think she would be sure to lose it—girls are so careless. Why, I could sell it for fifty pounds. No, that's too good for a girl, if she marries a nobleman one day—we shall see."

And then old Martin began to put all his treasures back again in the box.

It did not take him quite so long to do this as it had done to take them out, but the night had advanced towards the small hours when the box was deposited again in its secret hiding place.

Old Martin passed his hand over the wooden lining of the press.

"No one would know," he said, "that there was a secret spring there."

Then he locked the press up, and soon afterwards he undressed, changed his skull cap for a cotton night cap, wrapped himself about in an old shanty dressing-gown, extinguished the remainder of the wax candle, which had burnt low towards the socket, and then crept into bed.

Soon he began to snore. When he had snored some time, when his breathing became deep and regular, and gave notice that his slumber was profound, that his body was thoroughly wrapt, that his consciousness was completely gone, a figure crept from underneath the bed on which he slept. The thief did not quite fit the window of the room, so that a pale stream of moonlight fell upon the ground, and would have disclosed to any spectator the form of a man on all fours, creeping along the carpet. This man having approached the door, noiselessly turned the key, then the handle, and so passed out into the passage.

Once there, he stood upon his feet, and hurried on towards another portion of the manor. He turned the handle of a door, and entered a room. He groped his way to the fire-place, found a match-box and candle, struck a light, and the light fell full upon the haggard, handsome face of Roger, the Miser's Heir! He was pale with watching and excitement, and there was a mingled look of triumph, chagrin, and shame in his long dark eyes.

"I could ease him of a thousand pounds of that," muttered Roger, "but he would find it out the next day and suspect me, I know he would. And besides that a thief's a thief, even if he only robs a stingy lunatic like that, who deserves no better, and I have good blood in my veins. I should only do myself out of the inheritance if I robbed him; and yet who can say what one might not be tempted to do, if one were hardly driven. I shall tell all this to Mortlake."

CHAPTER IX.

And beneath that whisper we stood nor stirred,

The silence was so divine;
While our hearts, not our lips, spoke
their own sweet word,
And your eyes looked up to mine.

A MEMORY.

THAT was a remarkably fine October; the days were as warm and as bright as July. With light steps Ethel Thorncriff was passing along a green lane, bordered with tall hedges of blackberry, bilberry, and wild rose.

The dew lingers late in the autumn, and it glittered yet upon the scarlet hips and baws, the rich blackberries, and the bunches of bilberries.

Elthel had been upon a visit of charity, her heart was light, for her temperament was not of that kind which suffered her to be depressed by the pitiful economies which her old uncle compelled her and the whole household to practise.

Miss Melville and herself subscribed to a library at Kemerton, and the magazines of the day, the flowers in her garden, the friendship of the Denethorp people, and those occasional visits to the seaside and London, which we have mentioned, supplied her, on the whole, with enough of the excitement that is called pleasure.

She came on gaily. All of a sudden she was conscious of a presence near her, and a warm glow brightened her cheeks, before her eyes met those of Harold Harcourt.

He had passed across some fields of stubble, from which the harvest had been reaped some six weeks previously, and now he was leaning across a stile from whence he had been watching the approach of Ethel along the lane for some time.

He raised his hat when his eyes met hers, then vaulted lightly over the stile, and joined her.

Harold was a splendid type of a young Englishman.

He had none of that dark, foreign beauty, which distinguished Roger, but his physique was perfect in its way.

Tall and stalwart, and square-shouldered, a complete athletic, endowed with manly grace and enormous physical strength.

His hair and moustache, both of which were abundant, though the hair was clipped close, were of thataway brown which is so peculiarly English. His complexion was clear and bright, his features of that aristocratic type which is supposed to witness to Norman descent.

For the rest, there was a great deal of power expressed in the large shining hazel eyes and on the broad brow.

It was a face at once thoughtful, tender, and fearless.

The young law student was twenty-four years of age.

"I thought you had returned to London," said Ethel.

"No, I did not like to go until I had seen you, Miss Thorncriff."

Harold had called Ethel Miss Thorncriff for the last two years, while she had addressed him as Mr. Harcourt.

Perhaps this was only a sign of the growing attachment existing between them. She listened, her eyes shaded by the large straw hat which she wore, and then Harold said:

"There is something very divine in hope, but fear is a diabolical comrade at the best, and these two influences have been my companions alternately for the last two years. I hoped you might learn to love me. I feared it was impossible. And so I have been foolish and impetuous enough, as my mother would say, to seek you out in this fashion, and to demand the verdict from your own lips."

Ethel had expected what was coming, and yet she was violently agitated when it came. This sudden declaration of love, and in this impetuous fashion, too, from Harold Harcourt.

She looked down upon the ground, and faltered as she said, repeating his own words:

"My verdict."

"Yes, that is a strange way to put it," he answered, "but I do not seem to have the proper command of words just now, so much is at stake for me, so very much. I flatter myself I am not one of those lovers, Ethel, whom one reads of in very sensational novels, or very extravagant poems. I only mean that if you were to tell me that you did not care for me, and never would care for me, that I should not go away and shoot myself, or jump into the river, or do any other mad or violent thing which would bring my mother to her grave. No! I should live for her then, for her and my sister. And perhaps in some degree for my fellow creatures. I should still study law, and strive to become a valuable member of the Bar."

"Perhaps some day, when I grow old and rich, I might contrive to buy back Denethorp, which is fast going to the hammer, going to the dogs, and which I fear poor Christopher will never inherit. But with all this, Ethel, my life would be to me stale, flat, and unprofitable, without your love. I would lay down my life to obtain it, but if you refuse it to me, I will not, therefore, destroy my life. I will use it for the benefit of others."

Thus Harold spoke. And it was not perhaps a speech to flatter a lady. It is possible that some damsels would have resented his manner of love-making as unchivalrous and impolite.

There was, however, a vast depth of passion contained in his words, and in his tones. And Ethel, who appreciated his truth and his honour, who knew how nobly he lived his life, and performed his duty as brother and son, student and worker—Ethel felt a glow of pride and triumph in reflecting that she had awakened such deep emotions in a nature grand as that of Harold Harcourt.

It was a long time before she could find words to speak, and he mistook her silence.

"I do not want to distress you, Ethel," he said at last. "I know too well the compassionateness of your nature, and that you are grieved at being obliged to refuse me without any hope. I will only ask for word or two then, just a definite word. You cannot love me. Is it not so? I was an idiot to expect it."

"It is not that," faltered Ethel, "it is not that, Harold."

He had grown very pale while he had been waiting for her answer. Now a warm glow came to his cheek, and his eyes shone.

"I may hope, then?" he asked.

"Only," said Ethel, "Harold, perhaps you think that I shall be no burden to you. I only mean to tell you that my uncle has speculated and lost nearly all his fortune, and that he will have but little to give me. You ought to know that, it is only fair."

"And is that all?" asked Harold.

"I did not mean, Harold," said Ethel earnestly, "that you would care about money for money's sake, or that you thought of me because I was the niece of a rich man. But still, I know you have your way to make in the world, and it is only fair that you should understand that I am likely to be a burden to you instead of a help, should you continue to love me."

Harold stood still in the shady lane where they were walking. "Ethel," he said passionately, "I spoke of becoming a great lawyer and helping my mother, of some day buying back our estates. I spoke of all these things as of the duties left me to perform, if I failed in winning your love. But do you think that anything can weigh as one grain of

sat in the balance compared with my chance of winning you? I would give up law, everything for your sake. And I could find it in my heart now to go upon my knees, and thank Heaven that you have lost your fortune, because it has always stood like a cruel door, bolted and barred with gold, between you and me. Now it is opened, and may I take you to my heart, Ethel. May I call you my Ethel?"

In another moment Ethel was clasped to the heart of Harold Harcourt.

The lovers plighted their troth under the red and brown autumn trees in the lane.

The marriage day looked very far off to that couple, for Harold had not even been called to the Bar. And when that took place it might be some years before he would be able to make sufficient way in his profession to enable him to keep a wife.

And yet how happy those two were, when each found that they were loved by the other, above all earthly considerations, is known only to the angels. Ethel believed her miser uncle was now a poor man. Harold anticipated a life of penury and struggles for years. And still neither of the two would have changed places with any prince or princess in Europe. They wandered about the greater part of the morning together.

They had their plans for the future at which the world, perhaps, would have laughed, could it have heard them discussed, but then the world heard them not.

They were to meet often, of course. Harold was to journey up from London frequently, and Ethel was to visit at Denethorp.

In London too they were to meet, and also at the sea-side, whenever Ethel visited Colonel Brand.

In the end of course there would be a little money for Ethel, she supposed, with which she could help Harold. And as for his getting on nobly, and becoming one of the most learned and eloquent members of the Bar, she had positively no more doubt of it than she had that the autumn leaves would all fall from the trees; that winter would bring snow and frost; that the shrill winds of March would pipe along the valleys, and that May would deck the woods and lanes with wreaths of bloom and liveries of green.

Faith, hope, and love were all aglow in the hearts of Harold and Ethel.

They were in the shrubbery now of Greywold, trampling upon the fallen leaves, linked arm in arm, conversing in low, happy whispers, when a sudden turn in the path brought them face to face with Roger Thorncriffe!

They started and blushed, that very unpractical young couple, who had been discussing the future as if it were some garden of Eden, planted with all heavenly and earthly delights; whose golden gates stood ajar, waiting for them to enter.

Roger could not mistake the flushed cheeks, the lowered eyes, the embarrassed happy, foolish looks of the talented young law student, and his own lovely sister.

A gloomy shadow passed over the dark beauty of his face. He frowned.

"Good morning, Mr. Harcourt," said he, coldly.

Harold and Ethel were thus at once rudely recalled from what many wiseacres would have termed their fool's paradise, to the realities and disagreeables of everyday life.

There was no denying it, Roger looked cross.

"I almost think you are wanted at the house, Ethel," remarked Roger. "There is some consultation going on about preparing a room for a visitor. Mr. Mortlake is coming down again for a few days, and Spinette and Miss Melville can't agree about what room they ought to give him. We really have nothing in our old house good enough for the accommodation of a person accustomed to such splendours and luxuries as my friend, Mr. Mortlake. I wish you would go in and see about it all, Ethel. Spinette will be giving him cotton sheets to his bed, and ragged carpets on the floor, and she will be hanging such heavy curtains before the windows, that he won't be able to see his way about the room these autumn days."

If Ethel did feel any annoyance at having her delightful morning ramble thus cut short by her brother Roger's interference, she betrayed not the slightest shadow of anger, or pettishness, only upon Harold she bent a look full of love, which said, I am sorry to go, but you see household duties call me away. We will meet again soon.

All this was expressed in the shining light of her eyes, who gave him her hand, and said "Good morning."

When she was gone, Roger looked sternly into the flushed, agitated face of his companion.

"Would you have any objection, Mr. Harcourt, to five minutes talk with me," demanded Roger.

"None in the world," replied Harold.

Yet his heart beat fast, and the flush on his cheek paled.

The two young men walked along for a few moments in silence. Handsome Roger was plentifully endowed with those qualities which are described by the French word *aplomb*, by the English word *effrontery*, and which are further translated by the vulgar into the slang terms, *brass* and *pluck*. But though young Roger had been the very incarnation of brazen impudence, he could hardly have started at once without some preliminaries and hesitation upon the subject which occupied his thoughts. He looked down upon the red and yellow leaves which he and his companion were trampling under their feet, as though he expected there to find some solution to the problem which was puzzling his brain. At last he said:

"You and Ethel seem very good friends, Mr. Harcourt."

(To be Continued.)

THE SINGER.

Beyond yon gay calampelis,
In shine or shadow, all day long
She sits and dreams her dreams of bliss,
And weaves them into silvery song.
Behind her lattice all day long.

The south wind stoops in joyous flight,
To whisper of the woodland nooks
The hollows brimmed with purple light,
The secrets babble by the brooks,
That call to her from reedy nooks!

From the quaint cornice, reaching down,
The roses, swinging in the sun,
Drop on her little dusky crown
Their perfumed petals, one by one,
As she sits singing in the sun.

Across her antique window-sill
The shadows lean to kiss her face,
And ever, at their own sweet will,
The laughter-loving sunbeams chase
The shadow from her thoughtful face.

All day my darling sits and weaves
Her wondrous fancies into song:
The glories of the purple eves,
The graces of the morning, throng
The world of her impassioned song!

But all the winds that come and go
Cannot divine her hidden art;
The envious roses, swinging low,
Have missed the secret of her heart:
For only I—her lover—know
How her sweet fancies bud and grow!

E. A. B.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

CRITERION THEATRE.

"The Great Divorce Case" ("Le Procès Veau-radieux") having proved such an eminent success, what could be more in the natural course of things than that the management should look out for another French prize, and truly Mr. Wyndham's company appear to have hit upon one in the new piece "Hot Water," which under the title of "La Boule" has, for a couple of years, been one of the most popular productions of the Palais Royal. The story is full of comic elements, and they are cleverly introduced. Mr. and Mrs. Chancery Pattleton (Mr. C. Wyndham and Miss Fanny Joseph) are emphatically (when no third party is present) a pair of "nagoggers," and without any serious pecadoillo on either side, hate each other up to what may be called "divorce point." Their silly wranglings are exasperated and intensified by Moddle (Mr. John Clark), the valet of Mr. Pattleton in his bachelor days, who determined to separate his master from a woman who has usurped his former sway over his somewhat soft master. His schemes with this view are grotesquely villainous. Mr. and Mrs. Pattleton each set the law in motion to get up a "case" against the other, but fail in the required proofs of cruelty, infidelity, or other just cause, for a decree nisi. At this juncture Sir Philander Rose, a baronet with a strong taste for music, or rather for female singers, calls on Mr. Pattleton to take a house he has to let, intending to instal therein a

certain Mademoiselle Mariette of the Opera Bouffe à la mode. Sir Philander is treated to an amusing scene of mock affection and acted politeness between Mr. and Mrs. Pattleton, in which at last the lady's temper gives way, and she suddenly deals her provoking spouse a vicious slap on the face. Here is a chance for Pattleton. Personal violence in presence of an unimpeachable witness. Sir Philander is much annoyed at this entanglement. He is a married man, and if he should be examined in a public court, how could he explain to Lady Rose his negotiation for a residence for Mademoiselle Mariette. He appoints an interview at the theatre for Mademoiselle Mariette, and thither both Mr. and Mrs. Pattleton repair. Some amusing confusion takes place here. Lady Rose loses an earring at the Opera Bouffe à la mode, and discovers her husband behind the scenes. There are quickly two suits on foot, Pattleton v. Pattleton for cruelty, and Rose v. Rose for a yet worse offence against the marriage vow.

The third act is a carnival of fun in that very serious arena, the Divorce Court. Here Miss Nellie Bromley, being bidden by the clerk to "take off her glove," begins unbuttoning at the wrist, and proceeds to loosen button after button, until she draws off a "kid" the length of a stocking. The result is a complete exposure of the wicked schemes of the treacherous valet, Moddle, and a general reconciliation all round. Mr. Righton's Sir Philander Rose, Mr. Standing as one of the counsellors, and Mr. Ashley as my lord judge, were each exquisitely droll. Miss Eastlake made a pretty and lively Lady Rose. "Hot Water" should keep the theatre out of that unpleasant temperature of the aqueous fluid for some time to come.

HAYMARKET.

WHEN Dr. Isaac Watts wrote his pretty little sacred songs our general literature was not distinguished by accuracy as to its details on natural history. Otherwise the "goody goody" little rhymes would not have told such a barefaced tare-diddle about the good behaviour of little birds who fight in their nests for every worm or crumb brought by papa or mamma like little demons. "Never mind natural history," exclaims a playgoer, "what about 'Birds in their Little Nests Agree' at the Haymarket?" Well, they don't agree there, nor do they like their nest. The "birds" in Mr. C. M. Rae's piece are six damsels, who retire to a comfortable house in desolate indignant spinsterhood, where there is certainly as much pecking and hooting as cooing and warbling. Two young gentlemen intrude, who are denounced as "cots," but lo! when they go away two of the most agreeable and melodious of the "birds" go off also. How the rest of the "birds" agree in "their little nest" the reader will laugh heartily to see, if he drops in any night when Miss Maria Harris, the "early bird," or maid servant, Miss Trevor, Miss Kathleen Irwin, Miss E. Dietz, Miss Harrison, and Miss Osborne are playing, with Mr. Gordon and Mr. Kyrie as the welcome lovers.

AT the Court Theatre the promised comedy, "New Men and Old Acres" is in active preparation. It will in due time take the place of Mr. Coghlan's "Brothers," who will have to "make room for their uncle."

"No Thoroughfare" at the Olympic is improving in attractiveness as the general public discovers the ability with which this remarkable piece is played throughout.

Mr. Charles Hengler's Circus will open on the 2nd of December.

Mr. Byron's next burlesque is said to have for its original the opera of the "Bohemian Girl." We think "the poet Burns'" libretto has suffered the torture of travestis before.

Mrs. Vesia has improved her position by having to play Lady Macbeth three times a week, we don't know how it may be with "Macbeth" as a relief to "Richard the Third."

Mr. F. H. Cowen's new opera, especially composed for the Carl Rosa Company, is underlined for Wednesday, too late for a notice in our present impression. Its subject is Lord Lytton's well-known play "The Lady of Lyons." Pauline Deschampes is sustained by Miss Julia Gaylord; Claude Melnotte, Mr. Santley. If a young composer of such great promise, supported by the best baritone and one of the most pleasing sopranos of the lyric stage, cannot make this a success we shall almost despair of English opera.

Mr. Sam Emery chose the part of Fouché in the drama of "Plot and Passion" at the Adelphi, for his own benefit on Saturday morning last.



[HOPES AND FEARS.]

RICHARD PEMBERTON; —OR— THE SELF-MADE JUDGE.

CHAPTER VI.

"It is over! The judge refuses to pardon?" said the mother of the condemned man, in a low, hollow tone.

"I told you this morning, when that poor boy was so confident——"

"Oh, he is confident still. I left the poor, innocent soul sleeping a sweet sleep, trusting in the mercy of his fellow man."

"Be calm, be calm, and hear me," he said. "I told you this morning, when your son was so confident, that the future is always uncertain. I repeat it now, for there is as much to be hoped as there ever was to be feared from the uncertainty of the future. 'While there is life there is hope.' An effort will be made this evening by some of the most eminent men, and who are also very influential political friends of the Governor General's. They will present the petition which has not yet been presented, you are to remember, my plea having been only a verbal one, intended to influence his mind favourably for the prisoner before the formal petition should be presented!"

"And he refused you?"

"I had little influence. I was presuming. I overestimated my power of persuasion!"

"Yet you carried a widow's prayer for her innocent child's life—for her only child's life, which he held in the hollow of his hand, and refused to give?"

"I take it that Richard Pemberton is a man very hard to be moved from a stand he has once taken!"

"He holds my dear child's life in the hollow of his hand, and refuses to grant it! He refuses to pardon! The tyrant! When he comes upon his death-bed and cries for pardon, may Heaven hurl his soul to perdition for an answer!"

The good man and the warden started.

It was absolutely terrific to see the black storm of grief and rage that whirled in her countenance. Nothing was said for a few minutes by either;

indeed nothing was afterwards said by the warden, who was a mild and timid man for a jailor, and who

was now frightened into silence by the blast with which his only words had been received. At last the good man spoke mildly:

"My dear woman, Mr. Pemberton is no tyrant; you mistake him, he could not be if he tried. No, Richard Pemberton is a humane and upright man, but one who does not permit his own passions and emotions, or those of others, to govern him. What I sent for you for, was, not solely to tell you of my own fruitless errand, but to advise you to another course. You, and especially your daughter, must, if possible, see the judge before the petition is laid before him."

"Oh, do not think but we intend to do that in any case. It was that which brought us to the city yesterday in such haste, before we even suspected that others were busy in the poor boy's cause, and another petition was prepared."

"You intended it then?"

"Of course! Of course! Do you think we would leave anything untried to save him? I only waited for your coming before setting out on the errand myself."

"Humph! I was to tell you there is a possibility that you may not be able to obtain an audience with the judge, or that obtaining one, you may not be able to induce him to grant your petition. In view of this I advise you to see—— There is a lady," he said, breaking off suddenly. "There is a lady, and sometimes in this world of ours it has been known to happen, that where the valour of the brave and the counsels of the wise have been mocked, a lady's word has decided the destinies of empires and of individuals; and that too when the lady has been neither fair, nor good, nor wise. This lady that I tell you of, is all three; is very fair, good, and wise. She is Mrs. Richard Pemberton, the wife of the new judge. You and Ellen must see her this evening. You must strongly enlist her sympathies in your favour. I feel sure that all the influence she possesses will be used in your behalf. And remember that her influence, I may say her power, is very great, greater with the judge than of any human being alive. She is the woman that can lead the lion, if any created being can. Remember that after every other petitioner and counsellor has been dismissed, and the doors are closed, she will still have the ear of the judge through the night? And what may not her power accomplish? I assure you your best hope under Heaven is in her!"

Norah sat with her arms stretched forward together upon her knees, her hands clasped convulsively, her dark, stern face raised, and her fierce eyes fixed upon his face, devouring every word and look.

The warden sat behind them at his desk listening, and slowly and sadly shaking his head. But happily they did not see that.

"Sir," said Norah, "how soon may I go to him?"

"As soon as you possibly can. It is now a little after seven o'clock. You must see the lady before she leaves the house to go to the ball."

"Alas! that such contrasts should be! That such rejoicings and such wretchedness should exist side by side! And yet we would not have it all wretchedness either! Nay, Heaven forbid! Though we are all full of sorrow and heaviness of soul, let us thank Heaven that others are happy and light-hearted!" said the good man.

Norah had risen to her feet. Her face was positively haggard to ghastliness with the misery that was in it.

"Sir," she said, in a hollow voice, "I am going now to my poor boy's cell to get Nelly and to bid him good-night. For Heaven's sake do not tell him of your failure! If you cannot see him without betraying the truth, do not go near his cell till after it is decided! Let him hope! Oh, let him hope on a little longer, perhaps he need never despair! He does not expect you till late in the evening, so he will have no suspicion from your absence. Do not go near him till I come back."

"I will do as you wish."

"Sir," she said, turning to the warden, "if I should get the reprieve late after hours, could you not still for once admit me?"

"I will procure an order to do so," answered the warden, bending his pitiful eyes upon her.

Then he called the turnkey to attend her to the condemned cell.

When they reached the door:

"Wait until I come out again," she said. "I shall not be long."

The official unlocked the door, and the sweet, joyous laughter of a child broke on their ears.

Norah entered the cell, and there upon the side of the cot sat William, dancing his child in his arms, and laughing heartily at its gleeful laughter.

Nelly sat by his side, enjoying the sport, evidently inoculated with his own confident hope.

What a sight!

As soon as he saw the door open, he tossed the laughing child once or twice, and then threw it into its mother's arms, exclaiming joyfully:

"Here, Nelly, take the babe. The reprieve is come!"

But when he saw that only his mother entered, he suddenly sobered down, saying quietly:

"Mr. Godrich not come with the pardon yet! Well, it is just as I thought and said. He'll not be here till late, for I really do suppose the judge has not left the dinner-table yet, and there may be a dozen more complimentary speeches to be made, and a dozen other toasts to be drank before he rises. Don't you think so, mother?"

"Yes, my dear Willie. Dinners, we know, are heavy, tedious things."

"Very heavy and tedious to us, mother, whatever they may be to those at present enjoying them. I wonder how long they will keep it up?"

"I trust not much longer, Willie, but we can't tell within an hour or so how long gentlemen may sit over their wine."

"Especially at a state dinner, oh, mother?"

"I suppose so," said Norah.

She was frightened at the quick passage of time—frightened lest she should not be soon enough to see the judge and his lady before their departure to the ball.

Every minute was invaluable, yet she hesitated to leave him.

It seemed like tearing soul from body to tear herself from him now.

"Nelly," she said, as composedly as possible, "it is time for us to go, my dear."

"Going! You will stay till the reprieve comes?"

"My dear Willie, it may not come till late, very late!"

"True, very true, indeed! It was selfish of me not to think of it. You must go!"

Nelly was busy wrapping up her child that struggled and crowded in her arms, and thrust its little hands out eagerly to the father, longing for another round.

"Give her to me! I'll toss her again!" said William, as he took and threw it up and down until it fairly screamed with joy.

Then he gave the babe to her mother, and bade them good-night, saying, with a sort of doleful good-humour:

"I shouldn't wonder if I had to stop in this place all night after all! But anyhow, if the reprieve comes to-night at any hour, you may expect me at your lodgings!"

He folded Nelly in his bosom, but when also he would have embraced his mother, Norah, with a low "Heaven bless you," turned away.

She dared not trust herself to that tenderness.

CHAPTER VII.

This last speech has been made, the last toast drunk, and the last guest has departed; the states-dinner is over at the Mansion House, and Richard Pemberton has sought the retirement of his library, here to collect his thoughts and compose himself after the tumult and excitement of the day.

The lamps upon the table have not been lighted, and he is well contented that they are forgotten. After the glare, and crowd, and noise of the day he finds the darkness, and solitude, and silence of the house very soothing to his jaded senses and perturbed spirit.

And he sits alone for nearly half an hour; and then the door opens and a footman enters with wax candles and proceeds to light up the rooms, and in a moment every corner of the sumptuous library is thrown into view.

Richard Pemberton sits where he has thrown himself on first entering—in a large deep armchair near one of the tables.

The footman, having accomplished his errand, retires; but almost immediately reappears, announcing Mr. Bonford, who at once enters, and advances up to the judge, and bowing says:

"Mr. Pemberton, I crave your indulgence for my intrusion at the present hour, but my mission is one of the utmost importance."

"Mr. Bonford, I am happy to see you. Take a seat, and let me know how I can serve you."

Mr. Bonford then places upon the table before the judge four cards, saying:

"Sir, the gentlemen whose names you will see upon these cards request an audience upon a matter of life and death."

The judge lifts the cards one by one and reads:

"Robert B. Turner, Justice of the Supreme Court; the Right Rev. Bishop Storr; Major-General John Ryder, and Commodore Walter P. Rutger."

"It is the petition," said the judge. "Mr. Bonford, bring them in."

Mr. Bonford bowed and retired. A minute elapsed and the official returned and introduced:

"The Right Rev. Bishop Storr, the Right

Honourable Robert B. Turner, Major-General John Ryder."

The judge arose to receive them, and, with one hand resting upon the table, bowed, saying:

"Gentlemen, I am very glad to see you! Pray be seated."

A footman in attendance drew forward chairs, and the visitors seated themselves. A minute elapsed, and then Richard Pemberton, who had remained standing, said:

"Gentlemen, will you be so good as to inform me in what manner I can be so happy as to serve you?"

The venerable bishop arose, and going up to the table, laid upon it a folded paper, saying:

"Will you grant me your permission to read this petition, signed by numbers of the most respectable of the citizens of M—?"

"Is it the petition for O'Donovan's reprieve?"

"It is, sir."

"Do me the favour to read it, sir; and pray resume your seat in the meantime," said the judge, resuming his.

The venerable prelate sat down, and unfolded the document and commenced the perusal.

The judge turned towards the reader an earnest, attentive countenance.

The petition set forth at large, and most logically and eloquently, the causes why, in the opinion of the petitioners, the sentence of the law should not be executed upon the prisoner. It was signed by so large a number of persons—all of the first respectability.

When the reading was concluded, the prelate laid the document on the table, saying:

"Your excellency has heard all we have to advance. I have only to add on behalf of my friends here present and myself, that no small interest in the fate of the prisoner would have brought us to your presence on such an errand."

The judge bowed to this remark, and turning towards them all, inquired:

"Have any of you a correct report of the prisoner's trial, gentlemen?"

Chief Justice Turner drew a pamphlet from his pocket, and walking up to the table, laid it down, saying:

"I thought of this exigency, and provided myself."

The judge took the pamphlet, and said:

"If you will permit me, gentlemen, I will look this over."

"Certainly! certainly!" said Mr. Turner, speaking for the others. "We would not have you do anything unadvisedly and without full understanding of the facts."

Richard Pemberton examined the evidence leisurely and thoughtfully, and then laid it down by the side of the petition, and remained silent for a space of several minutes, which seemed to his company as many hours.

At length he spoke:

"Gentlemen, I cannot too strongly avow my sense of the humanity and kindness of heart that has brought you here this night. Nor can I adequately express to you the pain I feel in being compelled to refuse your petition."

Here an expression of deep pain came upon the faces of the visitors, and was reflected in that of the Governor-General.

"Gentlemen, I had made myself well acquainted with the case of William O'Donovan before to-night, and from my soul I believe him guilty!" To-night I have heard your petition, and I have referred again to the minutes of the trial, to see if there was any thing that in the first reading had escaped my attention, and which should yet influence my decision in the premises, and I find nothing new here. The trial has been conducted with the due formality, and with the utmost deliberation, impartiality, and humanity. The guilt of the prisoner seems to me to be an indubitable fact. I cannot have the slightest doubt of it, nor do I think it possible any one else can.

"Gentlemen, I think that the judge and jury have performed their duty in convicting and sentencing this man. I am glad that they have done so;

that no false sentiment of compassion has unseated the stern hand of justice. Mercy to the guilty is too often cruelty to the innocent. The pardon of a murderer is a deed pregnant with terrible responsibilities. We know not how much the hope of impunity tempts to crime! Let the consequences of crime to the criminal be sure, awful, unchangeable, irresistible, and many a reckless man who now gives way to his headlong passions would hold them in some check, and many a plotting villain would hesitate and turn back from his meditated guilt.

"Tell me, if you please, that the fear of punish-

ment is an improper instrument of reformation, and I will answer you that it is the only motive that can be brought to bear upon the minds; also that the laws do not attempt to reform the guilty, but to protect the innocent; not to regenerate the heart, but to restrain the guilty passions from breaking into overt crime. The law is not reformatory, but restraining—a terror to evil-doers. Only the Gospel is reformatory. The time may come when moral suasion shall govern the world; but the time has not come yet, nor will it be hastened by the abolition of just punishment and impunity to the criminal."

"Yes, the time may come when moral suasion will govern the world; but the world must be prepared for it first—a generation from infancy up must be educated in its spirit, and we must begin not with criminals, but with children. At present the law must reign. For some time past I have regretted to perceive a moral cowardice upon this subject prevailing in the community. They shrink from the stern duties of justice, and in their false pity of the guilty, grant them that impunity which leaves the innocent and the indecent exposed to their passions."

"In this instance, I repeat, I am glad that the judge and jury have had the moral courage to convict the criminal. I am glad that neither the youth, beauty, or genius of the accused, nor his most interesting family relations have been eloquent enough to turn aside the sword of justice. They have done their stern duty, and, gentlemen, I will do mine!"

"Duty be hanged!" exclaimed the valiant Commodore Rutger. "Of all the evils that are caused in this canting world, though the evil of hypocrisy may be worst, yet is the want of 'duty' the wretchedest!"

He wiped his face furiously, left his seat, stamped up and down the floor, and finally came back and threw himself into the chair again.

Richard Pemberton received this outburst with a dignified composure, only privately resolving, in case of its being repeated, to ring for an officer, and have him show the door. But the honest old tar recovered himself, made an apology, and silently resolved to keep within bounds.

"Gentlemen, have you anything farther to advance upon this subject," asked Richard Pemberton.

"One might have thought, indeed, that they would have little to urge after hearing what had been said. Yet not so, not without another effort would they assert their protégé.

Justice Turner spoke to him of the trial—of the condemnation of the prisoner upon circumstantial evidence alone; of the well known fallibility of such kind of testimony; of the numerous cases in which innocent men had been condemned and executed under circumstantial evidence, and whose innocence had been manifest only when it was too late to save them from unmerited execution.

He spoke of an aggravated case of the kind, which had come under his own knowledge in the course of legal experience.

And he begged the Governor General to pause and consider what would be his feelings if he should now persist in refusing to grant a reprieve to the prisoner, and after the execution, the dead man should be discovered to have been guiltless of the crime for which he suffered.

Richard Pemberton listened, and with respectful attention, but when the justice had finished speaking he answered:

"At the trial of O'Donovan all this that you have advanced was most eloquently urged upon the consideration of the jury by the able counsel of the prisoner, and yet the jury found him guilty. I think that they were right. I cannot annul their verdict. And to rule such evidence out would be to stretch the positive protection of the law over ninety-nine criminals out of a hundred. It would be to practise subtlety, to grant impunity to the deeper and more artful villain, and leave the simpler and less deliberate one exclusively to suffer."

The Governor General ceased speaking, and Chief Justice Turner coldly arose and asked of his companions:

"Shall we go?"

And all arose to their feet. But General Ryder spoke up in short, blustery tones, saying:

"Mr. Pemberton, what I came here for was not to argue upon the policy of the thing, but upon its humanity, and to tell your excellency, that the prisoner is but a youth, hot-blooded, passionate, rash, and that if he shot his man down in a rage, it is no more than you or any man might have done. And that therefore we ought in some sort to make his case our own, and not visit his son with too severe a punishment."

"General Ryder, I am sorry to differ with so

gallant an officer, and so humane a man as yourself. But it is precisely because you or I or any man may be tempted to do such an act that the temptation of impunity should not be added to the temptations of passion. Should the young man escape just punishment, there are many young men who will give the freer rein to their angry passions, who if he is executed will feel it necessary, in view of such an awful penalty, to curb their impulses. When the retributions of the laws are known and felt to be certain inevitable, irresistible, the laws will be obeyed."

The venerable Bishop of M— said:

"Mr. Pemberton, you have spoken at large of the merits of justice; will you hear me say something in favour of the divine beauty of mercy?"

Then he spoke of all men as sinners, and of the divine mercy that offered pardon and redemption.

Richard Pemberton answered:

"I may forgive my individual foes, but must not screen a felon from just punishment. Besides he who said: 'Unless you forgive men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses,' said also: 'I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil,' and that law which he referred to ordained that 'he who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed—that the murderer shall hang on a tree.' If that man had murdered my brother I might forgive my individual wrong, but should not interfere with the course of justice."

"But if the condemned were your brother?" suggested the commodore brusquely.

"If guilty he should suffer, though our mother interceded for his pardon!" said Richard Pemberton.

They looked upon his face and saw that he would have done as he said.

The faces of his visitors exhibited disappointment and disapprobation.

Richard Pemberton had risen from his seat. His own countenance was very grave and mournful. Addressing his audience in serious tones and measured accents, he inquired:

"Gentlemen, will you allow me to ask you a question?"

"Assuredly, Mr. Pemberton."

"Can you take it upon your consciences to say that this man is innocent?"

There was a dead pause.

He repeated the question, taking them individually.

"Rev. sir, I ask you whether you believe this man guilty?"

"We are none of us guiltless, Mr. Pemberton."

"It is enough." General Ryder, how say you, sir?"

"I did not come here to ask justice for an innocent man, but mercy for a guilty one."

"I have your answer, sir. Judge Turner, I inquire of your honour, whether in your opinion this man is innocent of the crime for which he is to suffer?"

"Governor General Pemberton, we are not here to try the case, but to intercede for the prisoner."

"I understand you, sir. Commodore Ryder?"

"I want the boy hanged, that's my opinion."

Richard Pemberton remained silent for a moment, during which the gravity and sadness of his fine countenance deepened.

Then he said:

"My opinion, gentlemen, is that you have slightly mistaken either me or my privilege. The prerogative of pardon vested in the executive can only be properly exercised when after sentence has been passed it is discovered that some injustice has been done the condemned, as when he has been convicted upon insufficient testimony, or by a partial judge or corrupt jury, or when circumstances have come to light to prove his innocence, or to throw a strong doubt upon his guilt. No other consideration would influence me. Under all other circumstances it is my duty to sustain the court in its action, and to see its sentence carried into effect!"

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE INTER-MERCURIAL PLANET.

Quite a stir has recently occurred in the astronomical world, owing to the famous French astronomer M. Leverrier having telegraphed to the various observatories in Europe and America that it was probable that the supposed inter-Mercurial planet Vulcan would traverse the sun's disk in October. M. Leverrier at the same time requested that astronomers would watch most carefully for the phenomena-

non, and this, it is hardly necessary to add, has been done.

The result, however, is disappointing, as the planet failed to appear, and the doubt as to its existence remains as strong as ever, although, on the other hand, the possibility of there being such another world is by no means unreasonable. It will be interesting, however, in the present connection, briefly to review the magnificent labours of M. Leverrier, as an incidental portion of which the hypothesis of a planet, nearer the sun than Mercury, suggested itself to his mind.

And these labours have earned for the distinguished scientist the title of the "weaver of worlds," for all the great orbs which circle about the sun have been gaged by him as accurately as if they had been placed in the scale pan of some stupendous balance.

The vast work which we are about to sketch began on September 10, 1839; it was substantially completed on December 21, 1875; and the fact was announced by M. Leverrier in person, at the session of the French Academy at the last mentioned date.

Every schoolboy knows that the sun is the central ruler of our planetary system, and that his mass is enormously in excess of that of all the planets taken together that he is capable of swaying their motion without being himself disturbed.

So colossal is the sun's attractive force that the like force which the planets exercise upon one another becomes extremely small.

The sun's power over Saturn is 250 times that of Jupiter, even when the planets are nearest together; and as there is no disturbance in the whole solar system greater than that resulting from the mutual influence of Jupiter and Saturn, it is unnecessary to proceed further to show the paramount rule of sun.

But small as these influences are, we cannot neglect them, for were the planets ruled absolutely by the sun they would go on circling in the same orbits, changelessly and for ever. Now if we consider that the more massive the planet is, the more potently it will disturb its neighbour, it follows that, even if we cannot tell exactly how much this disturbance amounts to, we can tell how large the planet's mass is compared, say, with the earth's.

Thus we can consider how Venus disturbs Mercury and thus infer her mass, and a chance comet may be affected by Venus, enough to afford us means for another determination.

If our results over several observations failed to agree, we should search why; we should assume an error, which must be hunted down; and thus we should be led to one of two things, either to find our mistake, or else to discover some fact, before unsuspected, which has, unknown to us, become a factor in our problem.

This is Leverrier's method of dealing with planets, in a nutshell. Seven planets were known when he began his work; and finding that the tables of their motions in common use failed to rigorously accord with results of observation, he began the gigantic and complicated task of unravelling all the forces which produce the planetary movements.

We can't more than summarise his results. Beginning with the earth, he reviewed nine thousand distinct observations of the sun; and by carefully estimating the sun's apparent monthly displacement, he reduced the accepted estimates of the distance of our luminary by between three and four million miles.

Then he analyzed the observed motions of Uranus, and here he made the grand discovery of the unknown factor above referred to, which in this case could be none other than another great planet, producing the unaccountable Uranian perturbations.

Concerning a hypothetical planet, he calculated its position; and aided by the lucky circumstance that but a very short time had elapsed since Uranus and the new planet were in conjunction, on pointing his telescope to the supposed position, he found Neptune.

This magnificent result, shedding of itself enough glory on the astronomer to render him famous for ever, was, as we have seen, but incidental to the whole work, which has likewise included analyses of the motions of Mars, influenced by the great asteroid ring, and of Mercury, which has resulted in the noting of the remarkable perturbations, which are only to be accounted for by the existence of some inter-Mercurial matter, or probably by the existence of the supposed Vulcan.

To the latter view, M. Leverrier, arguing very justly from the analogies of the discovery of Neptune, inclines, and therefore he is constantly on the alert for any visible indication of the hypothetical planet.

In 1859 M. Lescarbault, a physician in Paris, announced that he had witnessed the black disk of an unknown planet cross the sun.

Leverrier at once investigated the details of the observations, and, despite the fact that the instruments used were of the roughest description, deemed the proof adduced conclusive that the planet had been seen; but Lins, an eminent Brazilian astronomer, subsequently reported that, at the reported time of transit, he likewise was examining the sun's face, with a very superior instrument, and that no black spot was visible.

WHY IS THE SEA SALT?

ACCORDING to Professor Chapman, of University College, Toronto, the object of the setting of sea water is to regulate evaporation. This suggestion does not answer the question: "Why, or by what cause, the sea became so salt?" but it assumes to tell us whence or for what object the sea is salt.

The cause of the saltiness should be answered first; and if, after we have ascertained this, it is proved that the salting accompanies a secondary ultimate purpose, the other question arises; but we believe that a careful consideration of the professor's hypothesis will quickly expose this fallacy.

In the first place, then, the sea is salt as a simple and necessary consequence of the fact that it must contain all the soluble matter which the rains have washed out of the most exposed portions of the earth's crust, and which the rivers have carried, and are still carrying, to the ocean. And as the rivers do not carry water as pure as that which evaporates from the sea, because they all, without any exception, carry various salts in solution, which can never be raised from the ocean by evaporation, the sea has, in the course of ages, become more and more salt; and the process is still going on.

Such a nice regulation of the amount of evaporation as the professor suggests is quite unnecessary, as it is well known that the regions under the influence of the evaporation of our large fresh water lakes are not much different in agricultural value or sanitary conditions from those under the influence of salt water evaporation, the sole conditions for agricultural success being, next to the nature of the soil, a liberal supply of moisture and solar heat; while in a sanitary point of view, a moderate supply of both is more desirable.

We must, however, give credit to Professor Chapman for his experiments; he proved that the amount of evaporation of fresh water, compared with that of salt water under the same circumstances, may differ largely; so that the evaporation becomes less and less, in proportion as the relative amount of salt increases. But we would give this fact an interpretation different from that of the professor.

In the condition of things preceding the carboniferous era, when the rivers had not yet dissolved so much saline matter out of the exposed earth's surface, so that the rivers carried it to the seas, the ocean necessarily contained much less salt than at present; therefore the amount of evaporation must have been much larger.

This condition of things was not favourable to animal existence, but it was to vegetable life; and this may partly explain the excessively luxuriant vegetable growth which was the parent of our coal deposits.

When in the course of ages the ocean became more salt, the evaporation became less; the air was not so continually overcharged with moisture, and was more favourable to animal life.

If thalassiness has since increased continually, and the dryness of the air has augmented in proportion, we must not be surprised that the regions of the earth, once fertile and habitable, have become dry deserts. We know this to be the case with the lands on which Babylon, and Palmyra, and other cities, were situated, which, as well as the whole of Upper Egypt, Palestine, &c., were formerly more fertile than they now are, considering the dryness of their atmosphere.

In order to become convinced of the influence of moisture on vegetation, one needs only to visit the dry highlands of New Mexico and Colorado, and compare the vegetation there with the moist southern part of Louisiana. If we take the former in summer, and the latter in winter, so as to have the same temperature in both, the difference will be obvious and remarkable.

SAN FERNANDO TUNNEL.—The tunnel through the San Fernando mountains has just been completed and is worthy of notice, as it is by far the largest on the Pacific coast. Its length is 6,966 feet, while the longest tunnel on the Central Pacific Railroad, in crossing the Sierra, is not over 1,200 feet. It is not two years since the first borings were made, and since then many unforeseen difficulties have had to be encountered. From the character of the rock and the enormous pressure upon the timbers placed as supports, the tunnel will have to be lined with strong masonry throughout.

AN OVERRBORING TEMPER.

NOTHING shows a greater abjectness of spirit, than an overbearing temper appearing in a person's behaviour to inferiors. To insult or abuse those who dare not answer again, is as sure a mark of cowardice, as it would be to attack with a drawn sword a woman or child.

And whenever you see a person given to insult his inferiors, you may assure yourself he will creep to his superiors; for the same baseness of mind will lead him to act the part of a coward to those who he can.

But though servants and other dependants may not have it in their power to retort in the same taste, the injurious usage they receive from their superiors, they are sure to be even with them by the contempt they themselves have for them, and the character they spread abroad of them through the world.

Upon the whole, the proper behaviour to inferiors is, to treat them with generosity and humanity; but by no means with familiarity on one hand, or insolence on the other.

TOM WINSTON'S VOW.

"WHATSOEVER misery or disappointment overtake you, always be sure that my wishes have brought them. If a blight hangs over your house, know that it is mine," Tom Winston said to Theo Thorpe, the day the latter brought home his young wife, Lucy Lane.

Theo only answered:

"I'd be sorry to believe that, Tom, and some day you'll be thankful to remember that 'the blight causeless, shall not come.'"

And then he went quietly into his mill.

The miller's cottage stood in a verdant hollow beside the mill-pond, where apples, plums, peach, and cherry trees ran down the sunny slope in front, and honeysuckle clambered up the walls to deck them with russet perfumes.

While up on the windy hill, across the pond, stood Tom Winston's house, with never a tree to shelter it from the winter storms, nor a flower to drape its bare walls, nor a woman's face to warm up its cold hearthstones, and to chase away the black shadows from about Tom's heart.

None but little Baby Maysie, the two-year-old child of his sister Bessie, whom folks said he had loved with no common love.

His gloomy face softened to none but Maysie, and perhaps he would have forgiven Lucy easier had it not been that Bessie's baby wanted a mother so badly.

"I'll get the better of him yet," vowed Tom, shaking his fist at the blue smoke curling up from the hollow, on the evening of that home-coming. "My blight, bitter and everlasting, on bed and earth, stick and stone belonging to Theo Thorpe!"

When the young wife heard that her old lover was going about vowed vengeance, she laughed in gay defiance, and declared that twenty Tom Winstons would not frighten her.

At the same time she looked with quite a new interest from under her lashes at Tom when sometimes she encountered him on the road, as if she would have said:

"It's the hurt so very bad, Tom?"

But Tom seemed to be stone-blind as he passed on his side of the way. Lucy was very pretty, and foolhardy, and so—well, being a woman, she set herself to conquer him.

One day she came home with her basket full of wild berries, and her black hair was full of corn-flowers, and bursting open the old mill-door, she stood in the stream of sunshine, with her hazel eyes full of triumph, and her merry, careless face full of laughing dimples.

"What do you think?" cried she, dancing on her little feet. "I met Tom Winston and that baby up by the wood, and I made Tom speak to me, and I just up and told him what a mean, envious fellow he was, and how for all his ugly threats I knew it wasn't in him to harm a bone of my body."

"You told him that!" exclaimed Theo.

"Yes; and he looked hard at me, and said that was true; and then we shook hands on it, and I took the baby."

"Now I don't know anything that could please me so much as that," said Theo, earnestly. "To hear of Tom coming round, and by your means, dear! But nobody could withstand you!"

This was the beginning of a truce between the house on the hill and the house in the hollow. Tom did not now very perceptibly towards Theo, but he did become quite cordial towards Lucy. Indeed, to

Theo's heartfelt satisfaction, he would sometimes hear from Lucy that Tom and the child had been at the house those evenings that he happened to be in town with his loads of flour.

And soon Lucy used to go up to Tom's house and take Maysie down to spend the day with her, and never did she look more winsome in her young husband's eyes than when sitting under the apple trees with her child on her lap.

The first year passed. A tiny, nameless grave was in the church-yard, and a little face, never seen in life, was cherished in Theo's loving heart.

"Ah, no, Tom's blight couldn't hurt us," Theo had answered, in humble faith, while his Lucy, in her illness and sorrow, had muttered, with fevered roisteration:

"If it hadn't been for him—if it hadn't been for him."

Lucy was in the corn-fields again, plucking the scarlet poppies and the bine corn-flowers, and she clung to little Maysie more than ever.

"What a comfort she is," Theo would say, as she watched his wife's sad face glow into brightness at the sound of Maysie's prattle: "and how I thank Tom for lending her so often to us."

Words like these often made poor Lucy weep as she carried the child alone—still alone—to the house on the hill.

It was the anniversary of their wedding-day, and Theo was hastening home from his day's business in town earlier than usual, to honour the day by presenting his wife with a pretty gift, and then take her over to spend the evening at his father's.

No Lucy standing in the rose-girdled porch to welcome him.

So much the better; he could turn the horse into the pasture and write her name in the present before she would dream he had come home, and hasten back from her ramble with Maysie.

Going into the kitchen Theo unwrapped his present—a pretty little Bible in scarlet Russian leather, with mother-of-pearl back, and wrote carefully on the fly-leaf:

"To my dear wife, from Theo. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Then he went into the little bedroom to place it open on Lucy's pillow.

Everything neat, and folded away; but what is this?

A note on the dressing-table.

"She's been before me, bless her!" cried Theo, seizing it. "It's a love-letter worth twenty presents."

Then he sat down to gloat over it.

From red to white; from white to awful yellow, from yellow to dull, thunderous black, and then the miller cast the evil thing upon the ground, and trampled upon it with his heel,

Only these blasting words:

"I can no longer deserve myself or you. I should never have married you—it should have been Tom. I know now, to your disgrace and my own ruin, which I love. Oh! don't be cruel, Theo, for I am going to my ruin, though he has my heart. Forgive, if you can, the most miserable creature upon earth."

An hour afterward, Theo crept out of his dismoured home into the holy calm of sunset. The mighty storm which had swept over him had left him broken, haggard, and well-nigh crushed. And that storm was not yet over.

There was a giant of murderous vengeance wrestling in his meek heart for leave to wreak its will on the vile thief who had stolen his love, his honour, his home.

He stood on the bank of the pond, with his hands clenched hard, and his blood-suffused eyes glaring up at the house on the hill, where the smoke curled merrily; and oh! how the wish tore at him to go up and cover that guilty heart with coward blood!

Hark! a tiny voice calling out:

"Oh, no! Missar Tho'pe! I see 'oo!"

It was little Maysie, running down the slope and across the plank which spans the narrow in needles haste to reach one who had ever been kind to her.

A misstep, a scream, a splash in the water, the flutter of a checkered frock, the upraising of two little hands for help!

Tom Winston's baby slowly whirling down to death at the flume!

Tom Winston's baby!

Talk of vengeance—what more keen than this?

Theo stood transfixed, the veins knotted on his brow, Satan mighty at his heart to make him ever more a Cain—Heaven battling for this wavering soul with throes of pity and stings of conscience.

Death or life—which?

A smothered cry as the terrified little one swept past him, her eyes starting with affright, her baby-

face stricken and pale, her innocent little hands thrown up to him for life!

Theo's self came back; with one bold plunge he was at the throat of the heavy waterfall before her, holding on fiercely by the slippery log, and as she eddied round before the death descent of twenty feet to the flume, he caught her with superhuman strength, wrenched her from the current, and tossed her upon the dam.

Then battling for dear life for full five minutes, he got away at last, and clambered, bruised and beaten, up the bank to the child.

She was senseless; perhaps, after all, dead, and taking her to his desolate home, he laid her on his own bed, and rubbed her cold limbs. Pulling off her dripping clothes, he wrapped her in Lucy's warm shawl, and at last the blue eyes opened, and Maysie smiled.

Then Theo fell on his knees, and thanked Heaven for its great mercy in saving her life and his soul.

"How could I think to do it, baby?" he gasped, clutching her close to his heart, and gazing down into her wondering eyes.

While he was drying the little one's clothes and his own round the stove, and with her on his knee, was feeding her with warm milk and bread, awkwardly enough, but very lovingly, the door opened, and hasty feet crossed the threshold.

What was this?

"Theo!" sobbed Lucy, dropping at his feet, seizing his hand, kissing it, weeping over it, clutching it hungrily to her bosom, "take me back. I've come—come back to you! I couldn't leave you after that!"

She pointed to the child, with a passion of tears.

"Lucy," faltered Theo, very pale, but mild, "have you repented of the evil you would do?"

"Yes, yes, yes—a thousand times yes. I know my heart now. It was my miserable vanity, but never love. Oh, my own husband, forgive, forgive, and let me be the meanest thing in your house!"

"Tom?" asked Theo, trembling so much that he had to hold Maysie with both hands.

"He is in the porch!" whispered the frail wife, hiding her shamed face, "full of remorse, and waiting to ask your forgiveness."

"What?" ejaculated the miller.

This was far too wonderful to be understood at once.

He looked at his wife, humbled, repentant, well-nigh crushed; at the child, radiant with Heaven-given life, which he had preserved; at the dusky figure in the porch, so very like his enemy; at his own heart, whilom so dark and full of sin, and in a rush came his great deliverance home to him.

"Tom!" he shouted, and his enemy obeyed the voice, with bent head, and the red tint of shame on his dark face.

Speak he could not, but he took Theo's proffered hand, and wrung it hard.

"Oh, man!" cried the miller, with a gulp of thankfulness, "what we've escaped this day. Tom, here's the child; Heaven be thanked I didn't let her go in my anger!"

Tom Winston grasped his baby in both arms, and while his face fell on her neck something like a prayer—the first, but not the last—came from his remorseful heart.

And Theo, with tears raining down his cheeks, raised up the erring wife, and kissing her, whispered:

"The old place, wife, and honoured as before."

A. A.

STAGGER TAXES.—Owing to the rapid growth of the avenue of trees planted a very few years ago on the Victoria Embankment, the Board of Works have given orders for the removal of the main supports of the trees. Some of the trees measure over 24 inches in circumference, being a growth of 4 inches during the past season.

THE WIFE.

How sweet to the soul of man (says Hierocles) is the society of a wife, when wearied and broken down by the labours of the day; her endearments soothe, her tender cares restore him.

The solicitude and the anxieties, and the heaviest misfortunes of life are hardly to be borne by him who has the weight of business and domestic cares at the same time to contend with.

But how much higher do they seem, when after his necessary avocations are over, he returns to his home, and finds there a partner of all his griefs and troubles, who takes for his sake her share of domestic labours upon her, and soothes the anguish of his anticipation.

A wife is not, as she is falsely represented and

esteemed by some, a burden and a sorrow to man. No; she shares his burden and she alleviates his sorrows; for there is no difficulty so heavy or insupportable in life but it may be surmounted by the mutual labours and the affectionate concord of that holy partnership.

FORGIVENESS.—The brave only know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at. Cowards have done good and kind actions—cowards have even fought, may sometimes conquer; but a coward never forgave; it is not in his nature; the power of doing it flows only from a strength and greatness of soul conscious of its own force and security, and above all the little temptations of resenting every attempt to interrupt its happiness.

A WEDDING GIFT.

"It is useless, Harry. My mother will never give her consent, and I cannot marry without her blessing. Proud, haughty as she may be, has she ever been to me tender and loving, and I cannot wilfully disobey her."

"How can you reason so coldly, Nita? Is the love you have shown to me so poor a thing that you can give me up at the bidding of a cold, worldly woman, who wishes to see in your marriage merely the gratification of her own selfish ambition? True, I have not wealth to offer you, but I have my profession, and eventually hope to gain name and fame, when, perhaps, your mother may be proud to call me son;" and Harry Reynolds' cheek flushed at the thought.

"Do I not know all that? Is not my hope in your future greater even than your own? But I cannot alter the current of her feeling. Do not be unjust. What would you have me do?"

"Marry me. Come to the little nest I am able to build for my sweet bride. Nestle there and be content until I can offer her a home, grander, more worthy her beauty. Let me feel she is there, waiting my home-coming, ready to cheer me in my moments of depression, rejoices with me in my hour of triumph. Darling, once the fatal plunge taken, your mother will no longer be obdurate. For both our sakes, be strong. Think of the happy life which lies before us, and hesitate no longer."

"I cannot, Harry. Do not tempt me. Already I know it all. No life could be a happy one with my mother's blight, for she would almost hate me, Harry, should I yield to your entreaties. You little know her if you think she ever would relent. Who will suffer most, think you? You, in your busy round of excitement and ambitions strife, or I, alone with my own bitter thoughts? Yet not alone, for I can think of you, can pray for you, and for the future which yet may come to us, brightened, haloed by a mother's blessing."

"No—never. If my love is worth so little sacrifice, then is it worth nothing. I will give you back your freedom, and when you hear of the drinking to the dregs the cup of forgetfulness and degradation, think, 'It was my hand which put it to his lips, and bade him taste its fatal sweetness.' Good-bye, Nita, my dark-eyed love. You have sent me to my doom."

And with one last kiss pressed upon her white lips he left her trembling, almost fainting, upon the sofa.

Slowly she dragged herself to her own room, and throwing herself upon the bed where she had dreamt so many happy dreams, she fought the fiercest battle of her life.

Almost was she tempted to rise up and follow him to the world's end, if need be, so that once again she might listen to the utterances of his love, or feel his kiss upon her brow.

Luxury, wealth, she could yield without a pang, but not so her mother's love—the mother who, what-so'er her faults, had born her, nursed her in illness, cared for her in health, devoting to her her life. Not so could she repay it, even though she gave up her own life in the struggle. But later in the day a ray of hope came to cheer her. A note was brought her, and on opening and reading it a murmur of thanksgiving escaped her lips:

"Forgive me, Nita, for my avowed cowardice; but for the moment I was stunned, helpless. The plank to which I clung in desperation was so suddenly drawn from me that it seemed I must sink. Not so, however, would I reward your love and faith. Forget that I tempted you to wrong, darling. Think of me as striving to reach the goal your pious hand has set before my eyes. I will attain it, or die struggling to grasp it. You shall yet be mine, Nita—my

wife—my very own—only give me your love, your prayers."

"Yours,

"HARRY."

Weeks merged into months, and to the waiting girl came no further sign. Time after time was she summoned to her mother's presence to listen to some lover's suit; but to one and all she returned the same inexorable "No!" She was sorry, but she could not marry. In vain her mother pleaded with her—all was useless.

"Once, mamma, I yielded to your entreaties, and gave up, for your sake, the happiness of my life. You cannot bid me further mar it."

But there came a time when hearts and hands were full. A great crash burst upon the mercantile world, and Mrs. Loring lost her all. Helpless, dependent, the proud woman's head was bowed to the very dust.

Her beautiful home, in which she had so long reigned queen supreme, she saw snatched from her, her furniture fall under the hammer of the auctioneer, her horses and carriages, which had seemed part of her existence, pass into the hands of merciless creditors; and when all was over she felt as though her life had passed away, and nothing but a wretched existence remained to her.

Then Nita was the busy brain, the helping hand, which, out of the wreck of their fortune, managed to save enough to furnish the little cottage she had taken, and make there a home far from the scene of their former grandeur, where they might find rest and forgetfulness.

But when all was over, the bustle and excitement, came the reaction. None knew how she suffered alone, and in the silent watches of the night. She felt she had passed for ever from her love and life, and left no clue by which he might trace her, even should he care to do so; and so she gave him a long, silent farewell, and dropped for ever the curtain upon love's young dream.

A year passed on leaden wings; Nita was growing accustomed to their new life, and in giving what happiness she could to her mother, forgot in part her own suffering.

Of late there had been one constant visitor at the cottage—a Mr. Lyndon—and Mrs. Loring's eyes filled with some of their old ambitious light as she read in his manner and devotion the errand on which he came.

He was a man long past the prime of youth; but the glory of true manhood was still his; and when, in a few frank words, he told Nita of his love for her, it was with a sincere pang that she realised she had found a lover, and had lost a friend whom she had learned to prize.

But her answer was the same; she would never marry, but would be proud would he still continue her friend.

She went up to her room after he left her, slowly, heavily.

A packet of papers lay on the table. On opening one of them this paragraph met her eyes:

"We learn that the rising and brilliant young barrister, Henry Reynolds, is shortly to lead to the altar the young and beautiful daughter of one of our merchant princes, whose name we are not yet permitted to publish."

The paper dropped from her hands, and tears of agony welled from her eyes.

A few days afterwards she was called downstairs to receive Mr. Lyndon.

Summoning all her innate pride and courage she descended to the parlour, and before Mr. Lyndon left that evening he had obtained from Nita a promise to be his wife.

A week afterwards a gentleman requested an interview with Miss Nita Loring, and Henry presented himself to her astonished gaze.

He rushed towards Nita with passionate eagerness, but Nita drew back, and though the beating of her poor little heart could be distinctly heard, coldly requested him to state the object of his visit.

"Nita, my darling, I have come to redeem my promise—to claim you for my wife. My home is waiting for you—I long to see you sitting by my hearthstone, waiting to welcome me, when tired and weary, ready to make the sunlight of my home! The nest is ready, darling. Will you come to it—your home?"

Was she in a dream? Dazed, bewildered, she listened to his words, but the pallor on her face only deepened, and her hand dropped lifeless from his clasp.

"Then you are not engaged to another?" broke at last from her white lips.

"Engaged to another! Nita, did you think me so unworthy of you? What but your promise could have given me strength to stand where I stand today? What is it, Nita? Why do you look so white and startled? Are you not glad to see me?"

"You must release me from my promise, Harry."

"Release you—after all these years of waiting? Have you ceased then to love me?"

"Would to Heaven I had!" and her voice broke in a great sob. "Listen, Harry. I thought you loved another, were false to me, and in my misery promised my hand—promised to be a faithful wife, and these sacred promises I must keep. I can give my hand; he need never know it goes without the heart."

"Think you he would care for it? No, Nita. If he is as you represent him, he would spurn a gift so offered. Darling, tell him all, and he will give you back your freedom."

"I cannot, Harry. Do not ask me. In time I shall forget you—in time I shall give him love, even as I now yield him honour and respect. And now leave me. Our two paths, united a moment, are for ever sundered!"

With one last hand clasp, a few more passionate entreaties, he left her, and she dragged herself once more to her own room to fight again the bitter fight; but neither dreamed that all had been heard by one whose face matched their own in pallor, but whose eyes shone with a resolution full of nobility.

The wedding-day had come. In her mother's own little, quiet parlour the ceremony was to be performed. Very pale, but very lovely, looked the bride as she descended the stairs, leaning upon Mr. Lyndon's arm. At last they stood before the minister.

A few moments, and it would be crime to think of the man she loved; but, to her amazement, he to whom she has vowed she will a true and faithful wife—who shall ever remain in ignorance that she is not a loving one—steps aside, another takes his place, and when, in a few moments, the question is asked:

"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?" it is Horace Lyndon who steps forward and puts her hand into that of Harry Reynolds; it is Harry Reynolds' voice who promises to love and cherish her. As in a dream she goes through the responses necessary, kneels for the priest's blessing, and rises to find Harry's kiss first upon her lips.

"You asked me once to be your friend, Nita. I thought then I could better make your happiness as your husband. Fortunately I discovered my error in time to give two young hearts, who loved each other, happiness, ere I wrecked my own," Mr. Lyndon whispered in her ear, as she turned away, a wife.

But as years roll on, and Mr. Lyndon visits her in her home, a happy, loving wife and mother, she knows from what a cruel mockery he so nobly saved himself and her, and only prays her first-born may be as truly noble as he whose name she has been so proud to give him.

J. W.

HOW WE FLATTER OURSELVES.

"Ah, wud some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as others see us?"

We are not sure that we have quoted this oft-quoted couplet aright, for we are never certain about anything Scotch—as far as spelling and phraseology are concerned.

But we have got the substance of it.

No doubt Burns meant well when he wrote these immortal lines, but he was young, and he had not learned the fact that no person ever wishes to see himself as others see him.

We are all self-flatterers, and our friends—those we call friends—know it, and if they have axes to grind, they help us on in our course of self-estimation.

Privately every individual, however humble, entertains the idea that he is little superior to his neighbour. It is natural, we suppose.

There is a class of people who are continually decrying themselves; who take delight in telling everybody how bad, and unworthy, and unlovely they are generally; and this is the method they take to obtain the flattery for which their souls long.

For it is the custom of society to laud the man who humbles himself, and when any of our friends get into a fit of self-depreciation, and exclaim, with sighs that are almost tears, "Ah, me! I wish I were not so ignorant and so insignificant. Nobody will miss me when I die," do we not all hasten to assure the aforesaid insignificant individual that nothing could be further from the truth than his assertion? And we convey to him the impression that the world could not wag on without him—which was just the assurance he expected, and was fishing for.

We all think that placed in another man's shoes we should do better than he does. We are always saying:

"Well, if I had his chance I'd do very different."

"If it had been me I know it wouldn't have happened."

"If I were in her place I should do something worth while."

"Wait, that ain't my style."

We all think we look quite as well, if not a little better, than somebody else. The old crows, you know, described her young ones as the whitest crows in the wood.

As we grow old we do not know it, or, rather, we will not know it.

Our grey hairs are the result of headache. The wrinkles around our eyes and mouth are caused by frequent laughter.

We are jolly souls, we are.

When our complexions grow yellow with age we tell our friends we are bilious, and our family physician, who has an eye to a good fee, agrees with us, and we take pills and bitters, and nostrums of every description, and like the Irishman's horse, "get no better very fast."

When we find that our shoes must be wider we say it is because a bunion troubles us—we do not acknowledge that it is old age which makes our feet tender.

We put off the evil day.

No one likes to be called old. No one likes to be reminded of the fact that others think he is growing infirm.

Yesterday we were talking with a man of almost four-score years. We spoke of an aged man in the vicinity, who had recently passed away. We spoke of him as old.

"Why, no!" said our venerable friend; "he was not so very old! Certainly not! Why, he was not more than a year older than I am!"

We always flatter ourselves that we are of a little more consequence in the world than our neighbours.

"Why," said a lady to us, the other day, who was showing symptoms of illness just as the church of which she is a member was getting up a fair; "why, I can't be sick? What can they do without my help?"

And as we go along, we think of death, perhaps, all of us. Other people die and leave no void behind them. In a month they are forgotten. In a year their wives and husbands re-marry, and the dead are in oblivion.

We do not think of ourselves in that way. We do not believe our husbands will be looking for other wives before the sods above our graves have grown green many, many times in the sweet May sunshine.

We think we shall leave a wide void behind us. We believe that friends will find their lives condemned for all time by our removal—but if we could step back into the world ten years—yes, two years after our departure therefrom, we should find few faces sad on our account—we doubt if we found many glad to give us welcome!

But self-flattery is pleasant and it makes us happy, and it is comparatively innocent, and it is so cheap that anybody can have it.

And we are not like the dead and gone Scotchman—who don't want "to see ourselves as others see us." Not at present.

K. T.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

CONSTANTINOPLE is about 13 miles round, and is enclosed by walls on the western, or land side. The "Harbour," or Golden Horn, on the north, divides it from Galata, and the Bosphorus divides it from Scutari.

These are properly but suburbs, but make up together the city of Constantinople. It would be quite impossible to imagine a sight better fitted for the building of an Imperial city on.

Nothing would seem to be wanting; and it is no wonder that the eye of the world is every now and then fixed on it. The population of this Imperial city is about half a million, and is made up of a somewhat motley group—of Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Arabs, "Europeans," and Turks; the Turks making up, as it would seem, about one-half of the population.

It must be needless to say that the city stands on the site of antique Byzantium, founded 650 B.C. But long before Byzantium even there must needs have been a colony of some sort in such a spot of earth as this, and the first building on it of human habitations may have been of the "stone egg," and by rude men who have left no record.

The Moslem divides his day and night into twenty-four hours, it is true; but his day begins with the sunset. An hour after sunset it is one o'clock. It is at sunset, therefore, that the "call to prayer" is made from the galleries of the mosque minarets, and not at any one stated or set hour, and is thus made not a little significant.

The absence of churches and clocks, therefore, must make the city strange if nothing else did so. Then there is—what, indeed, was to be expected—the narrowness and tortuous character of the streets and ways, where anything in the way of plan or arrangement never could have crossed the minds of those who built the houses or dwellings which line them.

They can only be compared to the irregular way across an uneven field, with cottages built close to the edge of it, as the traffic across got year by year to be thicker and thicker. Each street of the city is a perfect zigzag, and a straight line is not to be found.

Indeed, there is a total absence of "planning" in any sense. From east to west the city is about three miles and a half, while from north to south it is about three miles.

The Golden Horn divides this main part of the city from Galata on the north; while the Bosphorus divides it from Scutari.

At the streets of Constantinople they will, but just bear the name—they are rather long and crooked lanes, with low, timber-built houses; and, contrasted with like streets here, with straight and uniformly-built lines of brick-built small houses, would look but poorly. Much is sacrificed, doubtless, to the picturesque in the streets or ways of Constantinople. An Oriental "bazaar" is, but little else than, a covered-in street, with goods exposed on either side of it.

HIS EVIL GENIUS.

CHAPTER XIX.

Such a discordant clatter and creaking, for all the world like a disturbed rookery, as we found going on in the yard into which we passed from a long, dimly lighted passage.

The unfortunate Herr Fussler, and his victim of mistaken vengeance, with as many others of their party and family circle as they seemed to have indiscriminately laid hold of, had only just before been brought in; and were then awaiting the arrival of some of the judges, who had been specially summoned.

Thus it was that I so thoroughly picked up the full and true particulars of the whole story, as I have related them to you.

The whole lot of them were remanded, without the slightest knowledge of when their trial might come on, which might be next year, just as chance or other circumstances might rule the matter; in this case, it was many months before all, more or less concerned, were well out of the business.

When my turn at last came on, I was, I must confess, not a little taken aback when the gendarme brought his charge against me.

He based his accusation against me—first, for petty treason, and a wilful insult towards the dignity and honour of the sovereign powers of the realm, inasmuch as I had dared in the open streets to jeeringly laugh at, and treat with ridicule, himself and his companions in arms, although dressed in their full municipal uniform, and at the time engaged in the discharge of one of the most solemn functions of their official duties.

Secondly, that being already marked by the police as addicted to irregular and intemperate habits, I, with other evil associates on whom the authorities had also an eye, had within the last few nights been guilty of battering in doors and forcibly breaking into unprotected houses; disturbing, his Majesty King John's liege subjects from their peaceful beds.

And thirdly, that when in consequence of my gross misconduct and immoral habits, I had been warned by my landlady, a most respectable and loyal citizen of moderate competence, to leave her lodgings, I had treated her with familiarity and insult; and upon the most frivolous and groundless excuses had refused to pay her one groschen of the large sum of money due to her for rent, alleging that I had no money or means of liquidating her just claims; thereby confessing and proving myself, in addition to my other enormities, to be no better than a common cheat or swindler.

And so the rascal was allowed by the functionary at the desk to run on, his pen not being stopped.

As I had suspected, it was a regular "plant;" it is, there had been a previous understanding between him and my landlady; finding me to be the same party who had dared to laugh at him, he was only too glad of the chance of avenging his offended dignity.

I still remember you mention earlier fugitive note.

Finding fair words of no avail, I tried on the deep indignation-tone, and eve with threats took to the "Cavil Romanus cum" dodge, and thundered the dreadful name of the noble Viscount then at the head of the Foreign Office in their ears.

That seemed to stagger them a bit; but on examining my passport, which by chance I happened to have with me in my pocket-book, the name of that widely reputed nobleman was not to be found in the document; either Lord C——, or Lord M——, I think it was, had been at the Foreign Office when I had taken out that passport for a vacation trip a year or two before.

So the long and the short of it all was that I was taken round to the debtors' side of the public prison; and there—not, however, without having knocked over two or three of them, for, finding them alike deaf to any arguments or reason, I lost all command of my temper, and declared that nothing but main force should compel me to undergo such rank injustice—it took no less than four of them to carry me by main force into one of their cells, which was about the size of a respectable dog kennel; and then the door was locked upon me, and I was left to my reflections.

Through a grating I could hear a dissension going on; it ended in one who seemed to have succeeded in out-talking, if not convincing his babbling companions, coming back to my door, and suggesting that if I really were an Englishman, as I alleged, material would, if I wished it, be provided to write a note to the British Minister, which should, together with my doubtful passport, be at once forwarded by a messenger whom they would procure for me.

This offer was made, I suspect, as a deep and subtle test; but of course I was too glad to jump at it, and should myself have suggested the idea, had I not thought that it would have been refused.

The note, stating my predicament and the sum for which I was arrested, was soon written and despatched to our Minister's house.

Suddenly my door was thrown open, and an official came in to tell me that I was free, and at liberty to walk out when I liked.

"Is any one from the British Chancery come, then, or waiting to see me?" I inquired. It was not so.

The messenger had carried my note to a companion of mine.

He had instantly taken steps for assisting his companion in distress.

Everything had been paid and satisfactorily settled by a noble English milord," the functionary said.

"All paid and settled by a noble English milord?" I said; "but who and where is he?"

I was informed that my friend in need had remitted the required sum, begging that the receipt and full discharge for the same might be handed to myself, together with a note which he then presented to me.

I tore open the envelope, and just picture to yourself my astonishment and overwhelming indignation when turning, as I naturally did, to the further end of the last page first, I recognised the signature of—who do you think? Melchior Gorles!

"MY DEAR LAMBERT (the note ran):"

"I have but this moment heard of your disagreeable position. Your messenger, who can find nobody in at the Chancery, very sensibly brought your note on to me, which, taking the liberty of an old friend, I opened, and am too happy to be able to assist you in your temporary difficulty. I am sorry that I am not able to come myself to you to-night, but am suffering from a severely sprained ankle, which, however, will not, I hope, prevent my starting from Dresden, as I intend to do by the 5 a.m. train tomorrow, on a most important affair, which, unluckily for my poor leg, admits of no delay. I am so very sorry thus to be prevented from coming to you and thus renewing our old acquaintance. Whenever convenient, as my address may for some time be doubtful, let your London banker pay the trifles with which I have, so luckily been able to accommodate you, into Coutea's to the account of

"Your old friend, and ever most sincerely,

MELCHIOR GORLES.

"B.S.—Though it is now many years since we have met, I have, you see, taken it for granted that the Mr. Frank Lambert whose note, under the peculiar circumstances as told me by the messenger, I have ventured upon opening, is the same F. Lambert who will remember the above signature as an old Eton school fellow; if not, I am only too happy as an Englishman, to be the means of serving any one who bears a once so familiar name."

I had to read this letter right through and over again a second time before I seemed to be able to take it in. I was so positively staggered, morally wound-up, so to speak. Then just calling myself

back into my corner, and quite choking as I was with rage and disgust, and a sort of indefinite terror such as one sometimes feels in a nightmare, I regularly set to to blubber, as I had never done since I was a boy at school of twelve years old.

I resolved not to accept the receipt and release which was offered to me. I vowed I would not go out.

Losing again all patience as the gendarmes stood there shrugging and gesticulating, I made such a sudden run at him, that beating a hasty retreat, and stumbling backwards over his subordinates behind, they almost rolled over together in a heap against the opposite wall of the passage.

I slammed to the door of my cell upon them, but unfortunately all the bolts and means of fastening being on the wrong side, I was at last overpowered by the united weight of the lot of them outside, and positively (would you believe me?) having called up further assistance, it took the same four to escort and carry me all the way downstairs, that it before took to bring me up; and having forced me across the court to the gates, we had there a considerable tussle before they succeeded in shoving me bodily out, tossing as they did, my rejected receipt out after me.

CHAPTER XX.

THUS set free in spite of myself, and finding myself with what, as the slang phrase is called the "key of the street," that is locked up everywhere and no place to call my own to go to, my first thought was to knock up Gorles, and so catching him before he could make his escape from Dresden to have it out with him without further delay.

But when I came to consider, I still did not know where he lived; his letter, which by-the-bye I had torn into a thousand pieces in my wrath, had I was sure, no address or date to it.

Besides, as I certainly had in spite of myself accepted the loan of his money, and though I did not wish it, was released at his expense, there might have been a little awkwardness in forcing a hostile entry upon him that night, without having the wherewithal about me at once to fling back at him, repudiating his alleged friendship and assistance, and there if I could have been free from all obligations, denouncing him for his atrociously malicious designs and diabolical machinations against myself personally, and my relations.

But how could I, you see, not having a blessed penny?

So I went to De Lyons' lodgings, and returned the compliment of the previous night to his landlady and himself, by knocking him up, and making him take me in.

I found my worthy friend Taraxacum tolerably tight again, and fairly recovering from his debauch, and, having been in bed all day, declaring Himself to feel, as he really seemed, as fresh as a lark.

He would insist upon my occupying his own bed, having no further need of it for himself; but if I would only turn in and make myself comfortable, that he meant to start for an early swim as soon as it was light, which it would be in another half hour, or thereabouts.

But I was in little humour for sleep, having my adventures to relate and discuss with my friend, to whom I gave a full and particular account of all, just as I now have done to yourself; not, you may be sure, omitting the extent to which I felt aggrieved and insulted by the way in which the hateful Gorles had forced his unlooked-for and most unwelcome obligation upon me; and how I longed for, and yet felt myself baffled in my longings for some means of punishing and revenging myself upon him.

"As to where he now resides," De Lyons replied, "I could take you there in a moment, as it is in Moritz Strasse, not a stone's throw from round the corner; but at this time of night, or to-morrow morning as it is, we should not, I guess, have much chance of gaining admittance without forcing our way in upon him, which feat would probably result in a re-introduction to your police friends. I quite wondered they did not interfere with us last night, considering the noise that was needful under the circumstances both at your own place, as well as Luttschau Strasse; but those sort of games, you may be sure, are not to be played two nights running with impunity."

"But as you do not seem to care about bed, why not sit up here through the next three hours, and be up at the railway station, in time for the train by which he told you he was to be starting? There you would be sure to catch the little sinner."

I had despondently to remind my friend of my utter inability to relieve myself of the odious debt, and the scruples I could not help entertaining upon the propriety of thrashing a fellow, as I felt he

ought to be thrashed, until I was free from what I felt to be the disgrace of being under such an obligation to him.

There was no chance, you see, of borrowing or getting the money, in the meantime.

I am sure I would gladly have paid cent per cent, for the seventeen pounds, if I could have only got them anywhere before five o'clock.

I should like to have been able to have shied them at him in a rattling shower of money about his ears, or caught him over the head or shoulders with a good heavy bag full of it.

"Oh, as to that, if you look upon them for that purpose, I think I might, perhaps, master ten or a dozen knobby coins, with a few five-shilling pieces, or, at least, lead medals amongst them, which, though perhaps not all of them of much use as currency in these parts, would do well enough to pelt him with. They might answer your purpose if you could manage to pick them up and fling them over and over again, as he comes along, so he would be sure to do. He might think there was the whole sum there, after the opening volley or two; besides, you see, he would not have much time or, I should think, inclination to stop and count them."

There was something in the suggestion; still, on the whole, we did not think that it would exactly do.

"And what is more, my dear fellow," De Lyons added solemnly, "with the great, the very great power which, as you yourself must be conscious, he certainly has by some means or other acquired over you, there is no saying whether he might not put a spoke in your wheel, either by throwing you then and there into a state of torpor, or so affecting your mind or memory for the time being, that you should lose all control over yourself, and not know what you were about, or whether you were on your head or your heels.

"That power, the magnetic fluid, in fact, or odylic, as it is technically called, strong as I know it must be, by what I myself saw of the state you were in last evening, may be increased to an almost inconceivable intensity, by cultivation, and a concentration of volition on the part of Gorles, who thoroughly understands his own powers, and what he is about in these matters.

"It seems strange, when one compares the relative strength and physical build of you two fellows as individuals: but he must certainly at some time or other have contrived to have established a strong rapport between you and his own spiritual system, in which he must have gained a most wonderful pull over you, and no mistake.

"That same pull may, to be sure, be counteracted by any one knowing, as I happened to do in your case, exactly how the land lay, and so setting to work as I did immediately, to undo the party thus acted upon. But with most folks, who have no notion of even the existence of such strange dodges, —and how few there are who have, or even care to know anything about the simplest outlines of these stunning scientific truths! —there you might be struck stupid and helpless as if you were intoxicated, until the odylic forces, unless, of course, it is renewed, has, so to speak, evaporated of itself.

"Now, Gorles, I remember already telling you, has from his very birth been naturally endowed with a double extra allowance of the said magnetic power; and constantly cultivating and increasing that power as he has all his life been doing, not even sticking at —unless he is much belied—to "buckle up" to and avail himself of the personal assistance, and the good will of —, a powerful personage I have before alluded to; there is no knowing the depths to which he has not fathomed, or how far, if his fancy or malice should require it, he cannot and would not willingly indulge the abuse of the said tremendous secrets of nature which he has thus mastered.

"The professor himself," De Lyons then went on to tell me, "looked upon Gorles as quite an equal, if not even almost his superior in magnetic power.

"There was not much love lost between the two, though the former genius wished to keep on terms with the little wretch, as requiring his assistance for the great experiment with the spirit world, in preparation for which the learned man was mainly devoting his whole study and attention, and so they kept up an association, although there was wide difference which had at one time amounted to a quarrel between them, in regard to the use and ultimate object of their scientific investigations, and rather questionable dabblings in the black art.

"The professor as his faithful disciple had before declared, and I have since had every reason sincerely to believe, solely influenced by the best and most genuine philanthropic motives, while Gorles, on the contrary, only looked upon the mysterious secrets which were in his keeping as means for securing his own personal, malicious, and even more atrocious ends."

Taraxacum had, on the former occasion when he first opened upon this same subject to me, mentioned with a warning the name of Katie De Lornie, in connection with a discussion which had arisen as to the proper use or abuse of the powers they had acquired, but he had wandered off on another tack, and I, disgusted at the very idea of having even her dear name brought up among such a set of unscrupulous fellows, had not cared to bring him back again to the unwholesome subject.

But, curious to hear exactly how he had come possessed of that locket, as well as the whole particulars of his extraordinary, though, as it had turned out, entirely successful adventure of the previous night, I let him run on without any interruption, and as far as I could follow all the ups and downs of his story, it was somehow to the following effect:

It is perhaps, you may not be aware, an established fact in the science of mesmerism or magnetism, whichever you choose to call it, that, according to De Lyons, whom you must bear in mind to be himself a firm believer in all these matters, that as soon as, or even within a considerable time after the proper state of rapport has been established between the magnetiser and any other person, although separated by any amount of space, even though they may be in different and distant countries from one another, the influence and magnetic power may still be kept going and continue active between the two thus spiritually connected by the operator having in his possession anything which has belonged to or come immediately from the other, whom you may call the patient.

As, for instance, a lock of hair, or some such simple object as a trinket, a glove, or a slipper, has been found by experiments to answer the purpose. One individual may thus actually obtain a complete knowledge of all that others with whom he is in relation are not only doing but even thinking, or almost going to do or think at a future time; nay, more, can even exercise a control and direction over those thoughts and acts, and that, as I said, without the slightest reference to distance greater or less.

Thus much, I say, seemed to be no more than an old and well-known truth confirmed by many instances, but, as De Lyons went on to inform me, according to more recent discoveries and experiments in their most wonderful, not to say most dangerous powers, the science had progressed, and at last been brought to such an awful pitch that by the sole exercise of an intense volition on the part of some of the more advanced and enthusiastic performers, patients had been thrown into a state of coma and deep trance; and while thus rendered to all external appearance quite lifeless, their souls or spirits had been separated from their bodies, and actually caused to appear visibly, though De Lyons believed not tangibly, in the presence of those summoned by whose irresistible will they had been summoned.

"Stuff!" I said, "nothing should ever make me believe anything half so impossible or incredible."

"That you should have thought and said so forty-eight hours ago, I should not have been surprised," De Lyons remarked very quietly; "but after what you have yourself experienced, and witnessing as you did the state your own cousin was in, you are one to convince that there are —as Shakspere, isn't it, says?—more rum things in this queer world than ever were dreamt of in your philosophy, and no mistake. Still, without meaning to convey anything uncivil, the fact of your not being able to believe, does not make them less true as physical facts, you know."

So he went on with his strange story.

It was to this particular branch of diablerie, for I can call it no less, that Gorles, it seems, had been devoting his whole time and energies, just about the time that he was so very intimate with the De Lornies; and having, according to De Lyons, from the very first day he had ever seen poor Katie, done her the honour of fixing upon her as the object of his affections, and also very soon finding her to be naturally a highly sensitive and predisposed subject, too delighted at the prospect of gaining a complete and easy influence over her, had set deliberately to work to put in practice upon her the fearful powers which he was cultivating and felt increasing within himself.

Professor Zanber, and all the others of the clique, even I believe the Frenchman, had, with proper good feeling, entirely refused to have anything to do with or at all countenance the little wretch's proposals, which actually went the length of wishing to cause that young girl to appear in spirit in spite of herself at one of their usual evening meetings, and having thus gained absolute power over her soul, and, heaven help me when I think of it! I believe, fiend incarnate as he is, he even dared, to



[A FRIEND IN NEED.]

hint, having thus got her reputation at his mercy, his unparalleled scheme was to allow her body to be buried as dead, which by the law of that country must be within twenty-four hours after death, and by stealth or bribery recovering her body from the cemetery, and so restoring her soul and spirit of life to her, she would belong entirely to him, and owe her very existence to his powers.

Whether this scheme, utterly mad and impossible as of course it seems, were feasible or not, matters not in judging of the atrocious infamy of him who himself entirely believed in its being so, whileconcerting and doing his best to induce others to aid him in carrying it out.

Taraxacum also thoroughly believed in its possibility, I am sure, and indeed declared that the very same thing had been tried not long before by one of the principal disciples of the famous Baron von Reichenbach, and successfully, upon a lady who, being actually supposed to be dead, and been buried and rescued from her very grave in the manner described, and whom now they say he has in his power, living nominally as his wife, but in the most abject state of mental, moral, and physical subjection to her resuscitator's will, serving him in the capacity of clairvoyante, adviser, and oracle, as well as the perpetual victim of all his phenomena and scientific experiments.

"It was to this very individual, that when refused and scouted by his usual associates Gorles had gone down for assistance and further instruction to Vienna; and I know precious well," continued De Lyons, "what he had been after; though when he turned up again at Dresden he kept as much as he could out of our way, and when that wouldn't do, was silent upon the subject, as if he had quite given up or forgotten the very idea. But I was not going to be humbugged quite so easy as all that, and made up my mind to thwart him, as you know I succeeded in doing.

"Don't you remember my warning you some days ago? but as you seemed to be inclined to cut up rather rough on the subject, and some other matter turning up, I said no more.

"I never dreamt of his having the power he evidently can exercise over yourself, however, and whenever he can have managed to acquire it."

It was then I told De Lyons of my own old Eton adventure with Gorles, of which I have already given you an account.

"Oh, thus and thus is the milk in the cocoa-nut fully accounted for," was his allegorical reply

"which I must confess had, until you now tell me all this, been a very hard nut to crack, and had puzzled me not a little to conceive how on earth, looking at your relative strengths and proportions, the pigmy had contrived to circumvent the giant, as he evidently had, as far as spiritual powers were concerned; but now I understand it all plainly enough.

"So that knotty point being settled, let me go on.

"Our little friend, I am sure, had not intended that I or any of us should even know of his return from Vienna, but I chanced to come across him by accident the very evening of his arrival.

"It was, by-the-bye, on my way home from your own door that very evening on which you may remember, I met you coming out of the house in Lützschener Strasse, and first learned from you your relationship with the fair young lady in question.

"For the sake of having something to say, and having you fresh in my mind, I suppose I mentioned your name, reminding him that you had both been at the same house at Eton, and telling him of the fact of your having come to make some stay in Dresden. He at first stuck to it that he knew nothing about you, and remembered no such name; but, as the saying is, liars should have patent memories, for almost directly afterwards, upon my going on to remark casually that I had just seen you, and to advise him in a friendly way to mind his eye, if he was still thinking of trying on any of his little games with that interesting young gentleman Ferdy or his pretty sister, I noted a peculiarly nasty twinkle of malice in his queer little eyes, as he wagged his head, saying that he knew nothing and cared less about either the young lady or yourself; but that if you fancied you were to get her all to yourself, that you were very much mistaken; and that no doubt sentimental walks to the Wolfshugel and such places might be very pleasant, but that you might be certain that you would never be out or have any more of your delightful tête-à-têtes again for the rest of your lives.

"It struck me that was not so bad, considering that he had, within barely five minutes before, utterly disclaimed all knowledge or remembrance of you, but I was puzzled to make out how he should know so well where you had been and what you had been doing; of course, if I had known all I do now of his having those articles in his possession, it would have been all plain enough, your walks to the Wolfshugel or anywhere else, as I knew he had only

just turned up again in this city. He is an artful dodger, I know; but even he has not yet, I believe, arrived at the power of being in two places at once, though even that I should be sorry to take upon myself to pronounce to be impossible, as I have no doubt there is a way, if one could only hit upon the secret.

"Gorles and his lately enlisted friend and ally whom he had brought back with him from Vienna, came in very shortly quite unsuspecting, and, looking themselves in, set to work at their grossly misapplied scientific operations.

"I kept my wits sharp about me, though for a long time their preliminaries were dull and commonplace enough: Pluffer, which was, as far as I could make out, the colleague's name, constantly consulting a ragged old manuscript, as black nearly as my hat with age and dust, as well as a large notebook he held in his hand, kept prompting and instructing Gorles in their proceedings, and from time to time repeating sentences of an incantation.

"Between them, on a sort of tripod, was a curiously fashioned old concern like a chafing pot or rather dish, with a lamp under it, in which, though I could not from my hiding-place at the time exactly make out what it was, that enamelled toy was immersed in some strong chemical stuff, which was burning and threw up a pale blue flame. For five days I overhead one of them mention, as he stirred it, had it been thus soaking.

"They had for some time continued their operations and low mumbled repetitions, when, all of a sudden, Gorles, who now he was in for it seemed thoroughly frightened at the undertaking, for his face was as pale as ashes, and he was visibly shaking all over, caught his accomplice by the arm, and pointing to the other side of the room, stammered out in a whisper, 'It works, it works! She is here! Don't you see her?'

"The other fellow, who was as cool as possible the whole time, looked across and bowed courteously, but distantly, just as he would have done to any one whom he did not know, or with whom he had only a slight acquaintance; and then, turning to the crystal dish, fished out its contents with the hook or some such instrument with which he had previously been stirring up the flame, and putting it, all wet as it was, on the edge of the table in front of him, began diligently making rapid magnetic passes all over and around it.

(To be continued.)



[IN THE EARL'S STUDY.]

CLYTIE CRANBOURNE;

—OR—

BUILT UPON SAND.

By the Author of "*The Earl's Crime*," "*A Fight for a Peacock*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JAMES CLUBFOOT'S MANIA.

EARLY as it still was, Caroline Burlington was dressed, and pacing up and down the stone terrace which ran along one side of Denborough Castle, when the carriage conveying Lord Clive, James Clubfoot, and Sir Wilberforce Waterloo came in sight, and drove up to the principal entrance.

Though she could see them, Miss Burlington was hid from view of the travellers, and was thus not quite taken by surprise when her maid, a woman older, and if possible, more scoured than herself, and who had been her personal attendant from childhood, came in to warn her of the invasion.

"Yes, I saw them," answered the lady gloomily; "they must see the earl, it is useless my attempting to interfere; he is more self-willed than he used to be, and objection from me might excite suspicion; it's a mysterious affair, and it troubles me."

"I can well believe it does," replied the woman, with a sinister scowl, as, without another word, she left her mistress alone.

The morning air was cold and keen, and the lady of the castle had wrapped a warm shawl round her tall figure, but this could not hide the wasted appearance that had come over her lately, and a certain look which predated her whole face and form as though some internal raging fire were sapping up and burning out her life and energies.

"Where can they be, what can it mean?" she muttered, feverishly, as she beat her thin hands upon her throbbing brow; "there is some infernal plot," she went on, "and I, who thought to control, am the victim of it; the cords are tightening around me on every side, and I am like a fly in a spider's web, powerless to escape."

She was roused from her unpleasant thoughts by the gong sounding for breakfast, and remembered the

necessity for appearing calm and collected before her uncle's guests, for such, for a few hours at least, they were sure to be.

The old nobleman seemed to have taken a fresh lease of life since that night when Edward Cranbourne was summoned to the castle in the belief that his father was dying.

It was like the last rays of a long day that had been alternately bright and gloomy, the sun was going down, but before it did so, it came forth with one burst of parting glory, and so with this old man's life; the end was near at hand, but the sternness was gone from his eye, the forbidding, vindictive hardness from his brow; there was something gentle, almost loveable about him, despite his stately dignity; his days were numbered, he knew it, and wished to use them to stonk for the bitterness and injustice of the past.

Caroline Burlington looked at him before he was aware of her presence in the breakfast-room, and she half muttered, fiercely:

"He will live to thwart me."

There she was mistaken, it was the earl's death she had most to fear.

Lord Clive came forward at once to greet her.

"You little expected to see me so soon again, Aunt Caroline," he said, as he took her cold hand in his own. "And this," he added, turning to the artist, "is Mr. Clubfoot, at whose house I met you with Clytie, but, perhaps, you have seen him before?"

"No, I have not," was the brusque reply, "and what brings him and you here?"

"We came to see my uncle, the earl," replied Clive, somewhat annoyed at her tone and manner, then, he added, watching her keenly, "uncle was quite surprised that you had been to see Cousin Clytie so recently."

Miss Burlington's face, from being a dull grey, became almost green in its tint as Clive thus spoke. She made no reply, but turned away to glance at the earl and his friend, Sir Wilberforce Waterloo, who were standing talking earnestly together in the recess of one of the windows.

She knew the baronet slightly, had met him years before, and disliked him as she did many people; now she felt that her enemies were surrounding her and were upon her, and she determined to battle for every step to the last.

True she had been outwitted, and had lost what she plotted for, but they at least should not know it. They could not deprive her of her own fortune,

they could prove nothing, and she determined to have the satisfaction of behaving in as offensive and disagreeable a manner as was possible with her own position and dignity.

There are ways of being rude and unbearable without being vulgar, and Caroline Burlington was something of an adept in the art.

Running away or thinking of denying everything, she considered useless, so little, she persuaded herself could be proved, that she determined to brave, or rather, as Phoebe Crabtree, her maid, termed it, to "brave" it out.

A few words from the earl, and then they all sat down to breakfast, and the presence of the servants effectually put a stop to any but the most general conversation.

Even here, however, Miss Burlington's acrid temper displayed itself unpleasantly, and more than once James Clubfoot looked at her with an expression in his somewhat wild looking eyes, which occasioned her a very uncomfortable sensation.

The artist ate but little, though his eyes seemed to take in everything, he was restless, highly nervous, and seemed as though he were obliged to watch Lord Clive's most trivial movement or action.

After all, the meal was but a short one; three of the gentlemen had breakfasted before, the earl and his niece had no appetite, so it was little more than a pretence, and in less than half an hour they had all risen from table, and were about to adjourn to the earl's study.

Miss Burlington had intended to evade this conference, and to keep out of the consultation as much as possible, but Lord Clive, either wilfully or through inadvertence, said:

"Aunt Caroline, of course, will come with us; as she was sufficiently interested in Clytie to go to London to visit her, of course like the rest of us, she will be anxious to know where she is now?"

The observation was made to the earl rather than to the lady, though the latter began to exclaim:

"I did not go for the sole purpose of seeing the girl."

Her uncle said:

"Yes, Cara, you will oblige me by joining us; your honour as well as my own is involved in this matter."

She bit her tongue with vexation; she was to be dragged into it whether she wished it or not, and all owing to that accidental meeting with Lord Clive in Clytie's studio.

Without a word of reply, therefore, and taking

care to bestow a dark frown upon her young nephew; the lady of the castle went into the study with the others, and took her seat, wondering whether she was expected to play the part of audience, advocate, or culprit.

James Clubfoot began to state the case.

He told his four listeners, almost eloquently, how his father had known the late Viscount Blenheim, the Earl of Denborough's eldest son, though he had soon after his marriage dropped his title, and was generally known as Mr. Cranbourne.

It was gall and wormwood to the earl to hear how his eldest son had been reduced to want; how the father of this man before him had been his friend and helped him to gain a living and a livelihood in his profession.

But it was worse still to learn that his granddaughter had sought refuge from her uncle's roof with this man, and with his mother and sister.

"We were very fond of Miss Clytie," James Clubfoot continued, trying to state everything moderately and not allow the burning excitement that consumed him. "There was scarcely anything my mother and sister or I would not have done for her, and, therefore, when this telegram came," and he held out the paper in question, "Percy, my sister, came off with her; my mother or I would have done so had either of us been at home. There, my lord, is the letter with the telegram that was left behind," and he handed the papers to the earl.

"And you have heard nothing of either of the girls since?" inquired the old peer.

"No, nothing," was the reply. "I telegraphed to both of them here and got no reply; then I sent to you and got an answer that only frightened us more than before. I want for Lord Clive, he says he knows nothing about them. I have been to the police, now I am here. Where is Clytie gone with my sister?"

He was getting excited, his eyes were beginning to roll wildly, and Clive, who fell in a measure responsible for his behaviour, laid his hand on his arm, observing:

"Don't get excited, Clubfoot; we are all as anxious to find them as you are."

The artist looked at the speaker, whom he regarded as his rival, for a moment, then, with an effort, seemed to control himself, though the expression of his face was intensely sinister and disagreeable, as he said:

"Yes, that is it; we must find them."

"I don't like that man's face; are you quite sure he is sane?" asked Sir Wilberforce, of Clive a few hours after this interview; "he seems to have all the low cunning of a maniac, and have some especial hatred or terror of you."

"Oh, he is all right," said the young peer, carelessly. "A dreamy excitable fellow, given up to his theories and pictures, and troubled now as he naturally may be about his sister; we know too little of each other for him to bear me any ill will."

So said Clive, and Clubfoot overheard him, while a low, cunning expression came into his pale, haggard face.

"I must be more careful," he muttered to himself. "They are beginning to suspect me mad!" he went on, "I wonder if I am mad! If I am, and they think so, they will lock me up, and then where is my revenge, where is Clytie? No, I must have his life-blood, only that will bring her back to me."

And then, with the cunning of insanity that had taken hold of him, he tried to hide the fatal malady, that he might the more surely accomplish the purpose that was now the object of his miserable life—the murder of Lord Clive and consequent possession of Clytie.

Why the reward should accompany the commission of the crime he did not know, did not stop to think. He seemed to believe that Clive held Clytie prisoner, and that she would fly to his arms when he had once disposed of his rival.

This delusion in some vague, indefinite shape had been growing upon him for some time.

It had settled itself and become permanent now. Clytie was to be his, but a sacrifice had first to be made, and this penalty was Lord Clive's life. Such was the horrible delusion that had taken possession of him, and with maniacal cunning he lived and breathed only to accomplish it.

But we must return to the earl's study, where the party of five are still assembled.

"Surely my son could not have sent this telegram," mused the earl, uttering his thoughts aloud.

"The act is too dastardly, even for him!"

"No," said Clive. "Uncle Edward was hunting with me at Lord Bilbo's place, Broadlands; we were there for a week, or rather I was. I left him behind, so he could have had no hand in it. Besides, from inquiries I have made, and I lost no time in doing so, I am told that a woman sent this telegram from Newcastle."

"A woman!" exclaimed the earl, and involuntarily they all glanced at Miss Burlington, who, with great self-possession, endured the stare unmoved.

"Then," continued the young man, "I thought I had better come to you and place the matter in your hands as the head of the family, though, of course, I shall do all in my power to discover my cousin."

"And that is all you know?" asked the earl.

"Yes, everything," was the reply.

"You will excuse me by remaining at the castle a few hours," said the old peer; "in the meantime you will excuse me while I have a chat with my old friend, Sir Wilberforce. You know the place, Clive. By the way, Cars, what made you go and see Clytie when you and Edward both told me you did not know where she was to be found?" he added, suspiciously.

Miss Burlington flushed, the question had taken her by surprise. She expected it at the early part of the interview, then thought it had been forgotten, and the falsehood was not quite as readily upon her lips as it might have been.

"I—I wanted to see what kind of a girl she was," she managed to answer at length, "and I found her next to be recognised as your granddaughter."

"Because me, sent, but that is false," exclaimed Clive, hotly. "Clytie is a pure and peerless woman as ever came under this roof. You want to see her simply to insult her; she told me what you said directly you had gone, and I only regret that your malicious intent had me back from doing then what I mean to do the next time we meet, and that is, ask her to be my wife."

"You shall have my consent if you gain her, my blessing with it," said the earl, "even though your aunt thinks her unfit to be my granddaughter. Poor little girl, she was hastening here to see me. Give me your arm, Victor, my boy; the second generation are better than the first. Come along, Wilberforce; the boy's brains are known, he will help us."

And so saying, the earl, leaning upon Lord Clive's arm, and accompanied by Sir Wilberforce, Waterloo, walked out of the room, leaving James Clubfoot and Miss Burlington alone.

Then it was that Caroline Burlington made another great blunder: she began to try to win over to her side and make a confidant of the madman, for though he had hidden the fact so far, he was hopelessly and dangerously insane.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISS BURLINGTON ADMires THE MARQUIS.

THE Marquis de Santé began to think he was going on a long, and by no means pleasant journey when the train into which he had so impulsively jumped had travelled but a few miles from London.

He was dinnerless, which does not improve a man's temper; he also remembered with a twinge that his place was empty at a luxurious board, and the feast which had been intended as an honour to him would occasion the giver of it a certain amount of annoyance, which from many causes was very undesirable.

However, it was too late to repent; it might be a useless journey or it might not, in any case he would make the best of it, and there was the mysterious cause of it sitting opposite him.

Not a fair lady exactly, for time and temper had robbed her of the very few charms she once possessed, but there was a certain air of dignity and hauteur which seemed to entitle her to an amount of consideration, if for no other reason than because she demanded it.

Still, his threads of information were very slight. This lady had visited Clytie Cranbourne, was going north, as though her destination were Denborough Castle, and he was mentally beginning to anathematise poor Jen Curtis for sending him upon such a doubtful chase, when he noticed the object of his curiosity take from her pocket a handkerchief, in a corner of which was a coronet embroidered.

The Marquis forgot to consign Jen to the nether regions, and made an effort at conversation with the lady.

"Did she find the carriage too warm, and would she like the window open?" they were both sitting near the door.

"No, thank you."

The hard face became a trifle more firmly set, and for a time there was silence.

"What a grand country your England is, but, oh, so cold, the climate is too bad," was the next observation, which scarcely elicited any response at all.

Still the Frenchman was not to be beaten; he determined on a bold stroke at once. He wanted his dinner, that had something to do with it, perhaps; but he determined to discover, if possible, whether he was on a wrong scent altogether or not.

"Pardon me," he said to Caroline Burlington, with so much deference and respect in his manner that she could not but reply, "I am a stranger in your country. I go to Newcastle, but when I am there can you tell me shall I have far to go to Denborough Castle?"

The lady started, as well she might, then said in a tone which she tried to render as cold and indifferent as possible: "About twelve miles, I should think."

"Ah, thank you very much, you know the place then. Perhaps you knew my friend, the son of the earl, Mr. Cranbourne; it is he I go to see."

"Yes," was the reluctant reply, "I know him, but do you know his father is very ill; does Edward expect you?"

She had committed herself, and was scarcely aware of it, though the wily Frenchman noticed the slip at once.

"No; my friend does not expect me, I only intended to call, on my way to the North; but if the earl is very ill, perhaps I had better defer it until I return to town."

"The earl is very ill," said Caroline, particularly anxious that this stranger should not go to the castle and report the fact of her having been to London. Then she said desperately, "Edward Cranbourne is my cousin, if you care to entrust me with a message, I will give it to him."

"Thanking a thousand thanks, but I will not trouble you. I shall call on my friend, your cousin, when he returns to town, and as I do not go to Denborough I think I will stay at York instead of going on to Newcastle for the night, unless I may be permitted to see you safely to the end of your journey?"

"I am quite able to take care of myself, thank you," was the cold reply; "but who shall I tell my cousin I met?"

"Permit me to give you my card, though it is of no consequence; mon cher Cranbourne and I shall meet in town, I wish I might hope to have the pleasure of meeting you again."

Caroline Burlington had glanced at the card during this time. Naturally a very vain woman, she was ready to accept admiration at any time, almost from any person. On this point she was weak, foolish, and as easily led as the most frivolous of her sex, and time, which is erroneously supposed to bring wisdom with it, had in her case but made her more silly.

She would play at being in love, almost imagine she was so; go through all the stages and phases of the tender passion, until just before the irrevocable step was to be taken, she would find that it was her fortune, not herself that was adored, or a few grains of common sense would come to the rescue before it was too late.

As I observed, time, instead of improving, had made her worse. True, she had bargained with Edward Cranbourne, that if he succeeded his father he should marry her; but to make the stipulation was very galling, both to her pride and vanity, and the idea now flashed across her mind, that if she could marry this marquis she would mortify her cousin and be in a higher grade of rank than as Countess of Denborough.

True, the marquis must have been younger than herself, and he was a foreigner, which was an objection; still he might be worth cultivation, so she said, with a little more cordiality.

"Denborough Castle is my home, and the earl is my uncle; had he been in good health any friend of my cousin's would have been welcome, and I should also have been pleased to receive you."

"The old cat!" thought the Frenchman, "trying on the airs and graces of sixteen with me; but it is always the way, an old idiot is always the greatest; but she might be worth keeping in stock. She must have money of her own, besides, she is a relative of that artist girl, the heiress, and hates her well, no doubt. No, there is no dinner for me to-night, instead of that I must make love to this cat; but she shall pay for it in the long run, or my name is not—well never mind. I must marry, that is certain; the old or the young one, it doesn't matter which."

With this convenient conclusion he began to talk, both with tongue and eyes, until Miss Burlington really believed she had made a conquest, and under that conviction consented coyly and with timidity, and shrinking timidity, you may be sure, to allow the marquis to write to her, to answer his letter, and possibly to meet him again. It was tacitly agreed also that Edward Cranbourne was to know nothing about it.

The sigh was genuine, though it was one of relief, not regret, when, having reached Newcastle, where the dinnerless Frenchman did go after all, the lady entered a hired carriage, and he kissed her gloved hand in saying adieu.

"Ah, now to eat! what a martyrdom that cat has been," with which complimentary reflection he entered the railway hotel, and was soon busily engaged in making up for lost time.

An hour or two later, the same morning, which saw the Marquis de Santé breakfasting and dining all in one at Newcastle, found Iona Curtis in by no means the most amiable mood, cooking her husband's breakfast.

Not that she was particularly angry with her spouse, but she was out of sorts, and dissatisfied with herself, which with her was the very best of reasons for being out of temper with everybody else.

She had been foiled and thwarted in her plots and plans at the very commencement.

Her intention had been to squeeze a good sum of money, enough to make herself and Ben comfortable to the end of their days, and also to inflict a vague punishment upon Clytie, by way of revenge for the slight which she had suffered in being repudiated by her sister's child.

This latter part was vague, though she uttered a good many threats about it.

When she met the marquis, and recognised him as an old acquaintance, however, her plans were changed.

He had views with regard to the same subject as well as herself.

Revenge was all very well, he urged, it was money that she really wanted.

This he promised her, with the light assurance, also, that no wife of his would find her couch strewn with roses; and, therefore, on the subject of revenge, she might set her heart at rest.

Thus, matters had progressed.

Jem Curtis had not been thoroughly undeceived as to the share he was to have in the affair.

He was promised twenty pounds if the plan laid down succeeded, and certain other advantages were hinted as possible.

Matters had drifted on in this manner until the previous night, and then Iona began to feel that she had been used as a kind of cat's-paw by her former lover and present employer.

When morning came, and she heard nothing from him, she began to feel furious, and thought more than once of outwitting and defying him, by going to Clytie and revealing some of the plots that were being hatched against her.

Unfortunately, Clytie's last reception of her had not been encouraging, and she was doubtful as to what her next step should be; hence her bad temper.

Breakfast over, Ben gone off to some meeting as was usual to him, and Mrs. Curtis began to talk to her brother-in-law, Jem.

"Tell you what it is, Jem, you're not half sharp enough; watching the house isn't any good, you must make love to one of the servants. There's that little wretches, who once opened the door to me, a perfect little dwarf: she's sure to be as vain as a peacock, things like them always are. You must make love to her, then you can find out everything, do you hear?"

Jem made a grimace, he was not the most obedient of brothers.

"Don't much fancy the job," was the answer. "If 'twas t'other girl now, artist's sister, I wouldn't be so bad, but that dwarf, 'pon honour, Iona, my taste won't stand it."

"You're an idiot, Jem," was the complimentary reply. "The artist's sister indeed, why she's looking for lord; you don't know what women are, boy; they never think of marrying anybody like themselves if they're good looking, or if they ain't either for that matter. You must seem above them, whoever you may be, to get a second look or thought, so as you can't do that with the artist's sister, you must try it on with the dwarf."

"But you don't mean I am to marry her, do you?" queried the young man, indignantly.

"Marry her!" repeated his sister-in-law, with irrepressible scorn, "do I think you're a greater idiot than you are, 'twould be difficult. I know, but I don't. You're to squeeze her like an orange if you're to find out every secret about the house, and about my niece in particular, mind that. Talk of marriage, expeccment, anything you like, she's sure to swallow everything, only find out what we want to know. The dwarf can kick her heels afterward."

"I don't much like it," objected Jem; "it ain't quite fair, you know; she can't help being little any more than I can help not looking like other folks. I wish you'd asked me to do something else, old girl."

"Of course, you never do want to do what you're told, always something else. You'd go and make love to any girl that wouldn't listen to you, fast

enough, but now I want you to befool that little imp, you'd rather not. Very well, go your own way, I don't care."

And Iona flung herself upon a chair, though it creaked under the burden.

Her temper, as I observed, was out of order this morning, and when this was the case it was useless contending with her.

Once or twice Jem tried to argue the point from its various aspects, but he could get no response, a fit of sulks had succeeded declamation, and at length with grave doubts as to the wisdom of the step, he set off to obey his sister-in-law's instructions.

Poor little Totts, even her diminutive size would not save her from being the sport of such a very sharp and gay deceiver as Jem Curtis.

But Totts had always entertained very extensive and well defined ideas upon the subject of maxims.

It was indeed her one engrossing thought, the one subject that interested her beyond all others, and her fellow servant the cook used to declare that it almost made her die with laughing, to hear the tiny woman explain in all sober seriousness how she was going to furnish her house, manage her husband, and dress her children.

The whole programme had been laid out and arranged in Totts' brain; she had in fact with her saving-invested in a building society, succeeding in buying a house, in another year or two she would be able to furnish it, but also, one thing more was wanting, a very necessary element in the plan too, the husband was still a myth; some wonderful person who was to walk out of the future; and up to the present time he had not given even a hint of his intended appearance.

What was the use of a house without a husband, Totts had asked indignantly when questioned about her freehold.

But he would come, there was no doubt in her mind on that point, and with this comforting assurance for the present we will leave her. Jem Curtis was coming indeed, but surely he could not be regarded as Prince Pretyman. There is, however, no accounting for taste, especially in a woman.

CHAPTER XX.

TOTT'S FALLS IN LOVE.

Yes, Totts had got a sweetheart; he was not exactly the embodiment of her ideal, it is true, but what woman ever does meet with the fairy prince she has dreamed of? and how many like Totts, have been satisfied to take the goods that Providence provides, or with heroic discontent decide to go without?

In any case the very novelty of the sensation was intoxicating; her heart seemed like an inflated and imprisoned balloon, too large for her small body. Her very limbs had the feeling of being able to float and rise buoyant above the ground, and if she had been thrown in the sea she would have expected to swim, by the very consciousness of the bewildering happiness upon her.

For poor Totts would never see five and twenty again, and during that quarter of a century no man had ever looked into her eyes or touched her hand with the magic power of love.

To a woman of ordinary stature and appearance, this might have been nothing; but then ordinary women do not look upon marriage as the one and sole object for which they were born. To the majority of the sex it is one of the possibilities and accidents of life, not their sole motive for existence. Totts, however, had no thought or hope in which the idea of being married was not a necessary element.

Jem Curtis began his love-making somewhat awkwardly, but Totts was by no means critical. He was a young man, the first of his sex who had ever asked her to take a walk with him, and she remembered that she had seen him loitering about the house for nearly a week past, and had never dreamt that she herself was the attraction.

On the Sunday evening succeeding the Marquis de Santé's hurried run down to Newcastle, Jem, who had spoken to Totts the day before, asked to be allowed to accompany her to church; but, when on their way to the sacred edifice he remembered that church-going was not exactly in his line; neither did it seem in accordance with the purposes he had in view, so he suggested that a walk in the park would be more pleasant if she didn't mind.

Totts, being of the same opinion, since they could not talk in church, the odd looking couple trotted off to Hyde Park.

There was far more in Totts than people gave her credit for.

She was bright, cheerful, and amusing, with a certain amount of droll wit, and tact enough to know when to use it, which made the little woman almost fascinating, when once she was interested and had an appreciative listener.

Jem, on the contrary, was awkward and uncomfortable; as a rule, he was anything but a shy young man; but he was playing a part for a purpose, and before he came to the conclusion that she was far too good to be thus used and made sport of.

This young man was peculiar in appearance himself; he had been twitted for it by other boys ever since he could remember, and the consciousness of it gave a feeling of pity and sympathy for Totts, which another person might not have experienced.

"It's like torturing a blind kitten," he muttered to himself, that evening as he went home; "and," he added, with a sigh, "poor little thing, she quite likes and trusts me."

Iona got very little out of Jem that night, and unwisely enough she began as she turned it to "chaff" him.

"Not sped in your wooing, Jem?" she asked, with a sneering laugh, "she wanted a guardman, at least, I suppose, those little mites always do; but never mind, Jem, faint heart, you know, and you'll soon be able to tell me something about my precious niece."

"I don't know that I shall," was the irritable reply; "think likely I shall go near the place again. I'll go to work to-morrow, that's what I will, and leave you and your Frenchman to do your dirty work together; for my part I'm sick of it."

"Ah, I see, the dwarf disagreed with you," said Iona, still in the same strain; "but you don't like work, Jem, any more than I like water to drink, so you'll soon tire of that, I guess."

"Yes, you guess lots of things, but you're not so knowing as you think you are, Iona, as you'll find out one day."

With which observation Jem went off to bed, and the next morning, to the surprise and anger of his sister-in-law, he did really go to work, and remained at it persistently the whole week without once going near the house in which poor Totts was watching for and dreaming about him.

At the end of that time, however, Jem's industry had been used up; his curiosity, perhaps some other feeling, which he scarcely stopped to define, made him wonder what Totts thought of his absence, and also, how a certain lovely lady whom his sister-in-law claimed as niece, and of whose beauty he had a profound admiration, was getting on?

Finding she could make no impression upon him with her tongue, Iona had at last given up talking to her brother-in-law about Clytie; she was disappointed both in him and the marquis, and this being the case, one of her occasional fits of drinking had come over her, and for the whole week she could scarcely have been said to be quite sober.

So on Sunday evening, a little before church time, Jem Curtis, dressed in his best suit, and with a flower in his button-hole, strolled past Mr. Clubfoot's house, glancing down the area, and gently whistling some popular melody.

Totts, who had been heart-sick with hope deferred for the last few days, now became suddenly animated; she ran up the steps, shook hands with him through the bars, expressed her pleasure at seeing him again, and added, that although it was cook's "Sunday out," she would try to get her to stay at home, however, if she failed, if he would mind coming down into the kitchen for a little while?

No, Jem had no objection to doing so, besides it was going to rain he thought, so as cook could not be bribed to forgo her walk, Jem Curtis was invited down into the kitchen.

The family had dined at six o'clock, for few of them went to church in the evening, and one or two of James, Clubfoot's friends, brother artists, were dining with him to-day.

Dessert was on the table when cook went out, and Totts hoped to have some time in peace and quiet to talk to her companion, when suddenly there was a rush of silk on the kitchen stairs, and before Jem could beat a retreat, Psyche Clubfoot was in the kitchen before them.

"Oh, Totts, we want the——" then she paused, noticing the stranger for the first time.

"If you please, Miss Psyche, this is a friend of mine," said the little woman, coming forward with as much dignity as though she had measured six feet instead of little over three.

"Oh, is it?" answered the young lady, while Jem stood up, slightly abashed, and yet wondering if he would be permitted to remain.

"Yes, miss, it's cook's evening out, and she'd nothing particular to go for, and I asked her to let me go instead, but she wouldn't, and so I thought the missus wouldn't mind my young man coming in to sit with me."

"Certainly not," replied Psyche, struggling hard to repress a smile, "don't let me disturb you. I came down for two glasses, Totts. I thought you were tired with running up and down."

"Thank you, miss."

And the glasses were taken up to the dining room, and Psyche convulsed the company with laughter in describing how she had disturbed Totts with her "young man."

"I hope he won't be walking off any of the plate," observed Mrs. Clubfoot, uneasily.

"Nonsense, ma, of course he won't. I'm going to send them down some dessert; it's Totts' first admirer, I know, so we must make much of him. What do you say, Clytie; ought we not to entertain him?"

"Certainly," was the reply.

So Totts was sent for, and Psyche gravely gave her a decanter, with a couple of glasses of wine in it, with cake and fruit on a dish, desiring her to ask her young man to partake of it.

To look at the little woman's face you would have thought a lover a very serious acquisition, for not a smile or glance indicated the possibility of her seeing any joke in it, and when Clytie, as the ladies were leaving the room, observed in an undertone:

"Remember, I shall provide the wedding dress, Totts," she answered as gravely as though the day were fixed,

"Thank you, miss."

Thus Jem Curtis sped in his wooing. Totts was an important little lady in the Clubfoot mansion. She waited on the young ladies as well as made herself useful in the house, and though the cook would have objected and did sneer, Jem was informed that he might look into the kitchen for an hour two evenings in the week, and once on Sundays.

But Jem did not go to work again that week, matters were drifting on more rapidly than he expected, and a chance observation from Iona opened his eyes at once to the danger of the position.

"Ben is going out of town for a few days, and I'm off to the north, observed Mrs. Curtis carelessly on morning, "what shall you do with yourself, Jem?"

"I think I'll go with you," was the reply. "It ain't proper, you know, for you to be going about with that foreign chap when Ben is away."

Iona laughed. She liked the doubtful flattery of being fascinating and sought after even now, and then she said carelessly :

"You can come if you like, Jem; only you must put more spirit into your work. We're going to take care of my precious niece for a time."

"Take care of her! why she's painting away like blazes, at Kensington."

"How do you know?"

"Why, haven't I been making love to the servant girl as you asked me to? What more do you want?"

"But you didn't tell me."

"Why should I tell you when there was nothing worth speaking of. The day I told you I followed that lady, and the Frenchman went after her, I made up my mind to find out who she was. Well, I've done it."

"And who was she?" asked Iona.

"She was another aunt; she came from the old earl to see what the girl was like, and there's no news beyond that. Miss Clytie, as they call her, is painting from morning to night, so is the brother and sister that keep the house, getting pictures ready for the "Academy," I think they call it. That young fellow, Lord Clive, sometimes comes to the house, and that's all."

"There'll be something more soon, Jem," laughed Iona. "I began to think you didn't care about the business and was backing out of it."

"Now I call that good, when I've been working like a nigger night and day, and only took a spell of a week's work at the shop, just to get hold of some tin. I'm not going to stand it, old woman, so I tell you. If you don't deal fair and above board with me, I'll smash it up, you see if I don't."

"There's nothing to smash," returned Iona, with a toss of the head. "I'm going down to Newcastle to-morrow, and you can go with me; if all goes well and the bird flies into the cage that is ready for it, we may all go a little trip by water and come back by rail. Now, there's nothing to grumble about in that, is there?"

"No. What time do we start?"

"By the mid-day train; Ben goes off early in the morning, and we go from King's-cross by the 12.40 train."

"Shall you tell Ben anything about it?"

"What should I for; I may go to see my own relations, mayn't I? What's the good of being connected with an earl, if you don't let folks know it?"

Jem made no reply. He did not choose to ask Iona the whole details of the plot in which they were engaged, partly because he did not believe she knew."

To a great extent they were working in the dark,

the Marquis de Santé being the prime mover and director in the plot, but, though he did not know what the next step might be, Jem had a vague foreboding that it would separate him from his old life, and completely take him away from poor little Totts.

So, as a kind of atonement for the evil that might follow, he resolved to go and see the diminutive creature that very night.

Five minutes before he rang the kitchen bell, Totts had been telling the cook how much money she had in the bank, what her interest or share was worth in the building society, and what coloured dress she thought of being married in.

"You see I'm not as tall as you are, Sarah, and so I shall wear white. It will look lovely, a white muslin, with a train, of course, and trimmed with white satin. Miss Clytie has promised me my wedding dress, and I dare say, if I wished it, she would give me silk instead of muslin."

"Better have a grey silk as will be serviceable after, instead of aping to dress like a fine lady and make yourself ridiculous, as if you wasn't enough so already. Talking like that, too, about weddings, when you've only known the young man a fortnight. You don't know what men is like, Totts; wait till you've had as many followers as I have, then you'll know they ain't worth much."

"I dare say you know best about your own young men, Sarah, but Jem isn't like them, I'll be bound."

"No, I should be very sorry if he was," replied Sarah, with a significant bounce. "Besides, he ain't asked you to have him yet, has he?"

Totts made no answer.

It was true that Jem had not only never asked her to be his wife, he had not once offered to kiss her, and though this was her first experience of the kind, the little woman had always understood, both from reading and observation, that kissing was a very necessary element in anything like lovemaking.

She would not have admitted this to the cook, however, for the whole world, for her fellow-servant was a tall, rather handsome looking woman, who, having no lover of her own at the time, had given two or three gentle hints to Jem about transferring his attentions to herself, which had been utterly disregarded.

Happily for her peace of mind, Totts did not know this, and when she met Jem, she looked so happy and delighted, that for the moment he thought what a pretty little woman she was, and there being nobody at hand to see him, he took her in his arms and kissed her.

Then, somewhat startled by what he had done, he asked, with his arm still round her:

"You are not angry with me, are you, Totts?"

"No," was the softly whispered reply.

And then the kiss was repeated.

Jem told her he was going out of town with his sister-in-law the next day, but would come and see her as soon as he returned, and asked her not to forget him.

"No, I'll be true to you for ever, Jem," said the little creature heroically, as with another embrace they parted, Totts to go back to her kitchen and her work, to use her own expression, "happy as any queen" and envying no one, and Jem to walk thoughtfully along, wondering what had come over him, and thinking, with a strange thrill of tenderness, of the little creature who had clung so lovingly to him.

It was a new experience in his history to be loved in this devoted manner.

Among boys and men he had been almost as singular as Totts in her own sex, and love had been blown by the winds of fate from many strange quarters, to find a home in many starved and desolate hearts, but Jem Curtis had only received a very small share of the precious gift, and now the love and faith of little Totts seemed a treasure which he must touch tenderly lest it should fly away, finding him unworthy.

Surely there was as much true romance in the love affair of Jem Curtis and Totts—or to give her the name which belonged to her, Matilda Trotman—as that which troubled the hearts of Clytie Cranbourne and Lord Clive.

But Jem had gone, taking the memory of Totts with him, and this was the night before that on which Clytie Cranbourne, with Psyche Clubfoot as a companion, started off in obedience to a telegram, to see her grandfather the earl, at Denborough Castle.

(To be Continued.)

PENDULUMS.—The largest pendulum in existence is said to be that which regulates a new clock at St. George's, New York.

"LET THEM ALONE."

NEVER try to rob any one of his good opinion of himself. It is the most cruel thing you can do. Moreover, it is by no means doing what you would be done by.

Crush a woman's self-esteem and you make her cross-grained and snappish. Do the same to a man and you only make him morose. You may mean to create a sweet, humble creature, but you'll never do it.

The people who think best of themselves are apt to be best. Women grow pretty in believing they are so, and fine qualities often crop out after one has been told one has them.

It only gratifies a momentary spite to force your own unfavourable opinion of him deep into another's mind. It never, never, never did any good.

Ah! if this world, full of ugly people and awkward people, of silly people and vain people, knew their own deficiencies, what a sitting in sackcloth and ashes we should have!

The greatest of all things that a man can possess is a satisfactory identity. If that which he calls I pleases him, it is well with him; otherwise, he is utterly miserable.

Let your fellow-beings alone; hold no truthful mirrors before their eyes, unless with a pure intention to uproot sin. So may a mirror without flaw never be prepared for you.

In those things which we cannot help, may we ever be blind to our own shortcomings. We are neither ugly, nor awkward, nor uninteresting to ourselves, if we do not know it.

An idiot may have the wisdom of Solomon in his own conceit. Let him be, and the path to the grave will be easier for him to tread; you will be no worse, he much better.

Leave every man as much self-esteem as his conscience will allow him to cherish. It may be a pleasure to enlighten people as to their faults of mind and person, but it is certainly not a duty.

M. K. D.

THE DIAMOND BRACELET.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

This next morning all parties met in the drawing-room, and notwithstanding every inducement held out to Mrs. Biggs by the earl and Eillot, her determination not to leave Sinda to the guardianship of the earl could not be shaken.

With many misgivings at her heart Sinda, accompanied by old Falla, prepared to obey, and a carriage being brought round, Sinda, Mrs. Biggs, and old Falla stepped into it.

A small van followed with the luggage, including all the costly jewellery and diamonds.

Sinda drew her veil over her face and sat silent during the drive to Lostwithiel. Old Falla held the hand of her young mistress in a close, warm clasp, and regarded her motionless figure with an anxious and troubled gaze.

But Mrs. Biggs was very garrulous.

She did not speak of her joy at recovering her daughter, nor indulge in maternal tenderness, but dwelt upon the scenes they were leaving behind them, the grandeur and stateliness of the castle at Belle Isle, upon the pride and haughtiness of the noble earl, and she dilated at especial length upon the beauty of Maya, and appeared very anxious to learn the extent of Maya's expectations and probable inheritance.

"Lawks!" she exclaimed. "I never knew afore how a lad lives. That there Leddy Katharine she jest lives in clover. She'll wear silk gowns and jewels, and have servants to wait upon her. She's a lucky creature."

And, oddly enough, Mrs. Biggs sighed.

Presently she expatiated, with roving garrulity, upon her own future, and declared that she intended to be a lady, and that she would have a handsome house and servants to wait upon her, and fine clothing, and jewellery, and luxurious dinners, and a wine-cellars, the key of which should remain in her own possession.

"I've been servant in a house out Fulham way in my young days," she said, "and I know jest what to do. Lor! it'll be a change for Simon and me. No more laundry, no more work, but jest take our ease all the time. Is then diamonds safe, Rhody?"

Sinda bowed assent.

"If anything happened to them," said Mrs. Biggs, "there'd be a pretty kettle of fish, for I'm depending on them there jools for all my splendorous future."

"But they don't belong to you, madam," said the Hindoo woman.

"They don't, hey? Why don't they? You're a heathen, and don't understand English laws, but the parent is owner and master of the child in this here country, let me tell you, and the child's earnings and possessions belong to the parent by law. Don't be setting up Rhody against her own ma, or I'll set you packin'."

Mrs. Biggs did not speak again until they arrived at Lostwithiel and had alighted at the railway station.

Then she demanded in which trunk Sinda's jewels were deposited, and saw it bestowed in the luggage-van with great solicitude, as if she regarded it as her own especial property.

The journey to London was inexpressibly dreary to Sinda. Not all her rare conscientiousness, not all her ideas of filial duty and obedience, exaggerated as they were by her years of orphanage and loneliness in India, could reconcile her to this horrible old woman, with her flabby, crimson cheeks, and bulbous nose, and bleary eyes. She was sorry that she had ever advertised for Mrs. Biggs. Better never to have known her real parentage, better to have gone down to her grave cherishing a sweet ideal of a loving, gentle mother than to have found a mother like this—one whom she could neither love nor respect, against whom her very soul revolted. Then she blamed herself for thinking thus, and despised herself for despising this woman she believed to be her mother, and hated herself for her pride and her fastidiousness, and was altogether so wretched and miserable that death would have been a welcome relief to her.

Only the day before she had been so happy in Armand Elliot's love; now she had given him up, and stood alone in the world, save for old Falla—worse than alone, since Mrs. Biggs was likely to prove her persecutor.

The girl's soul was in a mutiny. The very presence of Mrs. Biggs was torture to her. Every coarse accent of the woman's vulgar tongue annoyed and distressed her. To submit to this infliction days, weeks, perhaps years, how could she bear it?

It was impossible that Mrs. Biggs should not detect, in Sinda's silence and constraint, her shrinking and her dejected, hopeless attitude, the estimation in which the girl held her. And as she became convinced of the girl's loathing, the woman grew sulken and angered, and a fierce gleam appeared in her small eyes, and her manner boded ill to Sinda's future.

The train shot past pretty villages, and fields, and hop-grounds, and orchards, and brick yards, past tall chimneys belonging to manufactures, and past sunny cottage homes—it was all one to Sinda. She saw nothing but a blur upon the landscape. Her thoughts were busy with the place she had quitted.

Tregaron Castle seemed to her an Eden, and she had been driven from it like an Eve, to wander an outcast and friendless in an outer wilderness. How she had loved Armand Elliot!

How she loved him still in spite of the barriers between them! Her soul thrilled at the remembrance of his loving words. She thought of Lord Tregaron with a strange tenderness and yearning.

Next to Elliot, she had grown to love the stately earl with all the fervour of her ardent and enthusiastic nature.

Never to see him or Elliot again—never? How could she bear it?

She thought of Maya, pretty, selfish, heartless Maya, whom she had loved in spite of her faults as a sister, and who had turned from her in her distress; but even then the tears would not flow.

Dazed and bewildered she sat dry-eyed, with a face like marble, all the life and bloom striken out of it, her eye-balls hot as living coals under the thin, heavily fringed lids, hopeless, anguished, throughout the long hours of that terrible journey, barely conscious of the mute sympathy and tender ministrations of old Falla, who watched her in an unceasing devotion, sharing all her griefs.

The train steamed into its London terminus at last, and the passengers alighted. Mrs. Biggs hailed a cab and Sinda's luggage was transferred to its top, and Sinda, Falla, and Mrs. Biggs entered the vehicle.

The latter then, protruding her head from the cab window, gave her address to the cabman in a very loud voice, and the horse moved forward, making its way out of the station into the streets.

As the cab departed, a young gentleman who had occupied a seat in a compartment as remote as possible from that tenanted by Sinda and her companions, emerged upon the platform, signalled a cab, and gave the same address which Mrs. Biggs had given.

The young gentleman was Armand Elliot. He had

quitted Falle Isle only a few minutes after Sinda's departure, and had come up to London by the same train, determined to watch over her, himself unseen, until she should reach her destination.

Some sudden distrust of Mrs. Biggs, some instinct warning him of her real nature, had prompted him to this step, whose secrecy was especially distasteful to him.

Unconscious of pursuit, Mrs. Biggs settled herself comfortably in a corner, and regarded Sinda with a keen yet furtive gaze.

"We live out Peckham way," she observed, pulling her shabby old bonnet farther over her face. "I have a bit of green there for drying my laundry work, which is necessary for me, but nothing grand, of course. I shan't do no more laundrying. Them is over for me. I shall look for a new house immediate, a viller, with grounds and garting."

She discoursed of her future grandeur while the cab rolled over London Bridge, traversed the Borough Road, and proceeded through Camberwell to Peckham.

Sinda had given no thought to the subject, but had a vague expectation of being taken to an upper room in a crowded tenement house in a densely-populated district.

But she roused herself with something of surprise when the cab stopped in a wide, country street before a dingy, two storied, brick cottage, set in a little yard.

The yard was miserable, the cottage squalid, it is true, but it was evident that no other family shared the shelter of its roof-tree with Mrs. Biggs, and Sinda gave a little sigh of relief as she alighted.

The trunks were set in the yard, the cabman dismissed, and Mrs. Biggs producing a latch-key, gave herself admittance into her home.

"Come, Rhody," she called, "you're home now with your ma. Simon, he'll be along by night, and glad he'll be to see his dear sister, as he don't remember, seeing as he was left in England along of his granny when we went out, and you being born in Injy."

Sinda followed Mrs. Biggs into a little passage-way, uncarpeted, save with dirt, and unfurnished, and thence into a small room, which evidently served as the family living-room.

This room was poor and wretched, the floor encrusted with dirt, the windows overhung with cobwebs, several panes of glass missing, and replaced with old hats, pillows, and garments.

Several broken wooden-bottomed chairs and a rickety table made up the entire furniture.

Sinda was dismayed at the look of hopeless poverty and cheerlessness pervading the place. Since her adoption by the old Begum of Khasar she had been carefully shielded from all personal knowledge of privation, and it seemed to her now that she had entered upon another world than that she had theretofore known.

"Missy tired," said old Falla, concealing her disgust at the place for the sake of her young mistress, "Missy go up to her room, if you please——"

"Missy can go up now, then," interrupted Mrs. Biggs. "Tain't much of a room; but it's the best I've got, and you can have it to yourself, Rhody."

As the woman led the way up-stairs a cab rolled past, and Armand Elliot looked out from its window. He could see within the dwelling, the door having been left open, but he was not seen. He was strongly tempted to alight and present himself at the door of the cottage, but he stifled his inclinations and passed on.

"I will call in the morning," he thought. "I cannot intrude upon Sinda in her fatigue and trouble to-night."

Meanwhile Mrs. Biggs conducted Sinda to a chamber over the living-room. It was very like the latter, but Sinda entered and sat down warily, throwing back her veil from her face.

"We shall move to-morrow, if Simon comes home to-night," declared Mrs. Biggs. "But he may not be at home, you see. He's away nights together, Simon is, and no finding him if you scour all London. And he o'we stays till he comes, which I hope 'll be soon, for I am impatient to begin living, that I am! I'll get a cup of tea and run to the pastry-cook's for bread, and I'll be back in a jiffy as ever was."

She hurried out, leaving Sinda and her attendant together.

The Hindoo approached her charge and gently removed her hat and wrappings. Then she drew the lovely golden head to her bosom and showered kisses upon it.

"My lamb, my deary," she said, "I can't think but there's some mistake. This old woman can't be your mother. I've read the doubt in your eyes all day, missy."

"Don't Falla, I can't doubt. It would be wicked and foolish to doubt."

"But you can't ever have the least love for her?"

"Love 'her'?"

The girl repeated the words with a strong shudder of disgust.

"And if she was your mother, missy, there'd be some little grain of love, some little chord of sympathy. There would, missy."

"There would have been if I had been brought up in her sphere of life," said Sinda, hopelessly; "but I was reared so differently. And I can't like her—I can't. I suppose I'm wicked, Falla. I'll be good to her; I'll be a daughter in all but affection, but I can never, never call her mother."

And now the tears that had refused to come during the day welled up in a great shower, and Sinda sobbed and cried with a passionate anguish.

Old Falla soothed her tenderly, until the storm of her grief had spent its force, and then she bade her take courage and not to lose all hope.

"You never can know what turns things 'll take next," said the Hindoo, philosophically. "De cheer up, Missy, for my sake. If you grieve, you wring my heart."

Sinda conquered her grief for the sake of her old nurse, and the latter began putting the room in order, soon succeeding in giving it a tolerably habitable appearance.

By the time her task was accomplished, Mrs. Biggs appeared with a tray of tea and toast. She placed it upon a little table, wheeling the latter to the side of Sinda, whom she treated with a singular mixture of familiarity and deference. She sat down while Sinda made an effort to eat and drink, and chattered while her eyes fixed themselves in a covetous gaze upon the trunk in which Sinda's jewels were stored.

"It's a kind of lonely situation here," she remarked, plaintively. "Just the place for a robbery, with no plegg to interfere. And so, Rhody, you'd better gin me them jools to take care on. You see they b'long to yer ma——"

Sinda pushed the tray from her.

"You are mistaken, madam," she said, speaking haughtily in spite of her resolves to be humble to this odious woman. "The jewels were a gift to me from the Begum of Khasar, my dear mother, who adopted and brought me up as her own child. I cannot give up the inheritance I received from her. I cannot recognise your right to a gift that was made to me. I must keep these jewels, but I shall sell as many of them as are necessary to place you in a position of comfort and luxury——"

"Highty-tighty!" interrupted Mrs. Biggs, angrily.

"Such talk to me from my own child as ever I heard in all my born days! You won't give up the jools as is mine? You won't, hey? We'll see about that - we'll see!"

"Madam," said Sinda, deprecatingly, lifting her lovely eyes in an appealing look, "forgive me. I did not mean to speak so abruptly. But the jewels were the gift of one who was more than a mother to me. I cannot give them up even to you—at least not all. You shall have half——"

"I'll have all or none! They are mine!" screamed Mrs. Biggs, furiously. "Give me the keys!"

She advanced towards Sinda, her small eyes flaming, her hot breath redolent of some spirituous drink in which she had indulged since their arrival.

There was something so terribly menacing in her looks that Sinda recoiled before her.

The girl signed to Falla to yield up her keys, but the Hindoo folded her arms across her breast in a silent determination, an obstinate resistance, that did not promise well for Mrs. Biggs' success.

"Let her have the keys, Falla," said Sinda; "she is my mother. Spare me this exhibition of her brutality."

"That heathen has got the keys that you refuse to your own ma," cried Mrs. Biggs. "Give them to me, you creature."

"I won't!" said the Hindoo, opposing a rock-like calm to Mrs. Biggs' fury. "You are tipsy. Go away. Go downstairs."

Falla enforced her command by seizing hold of her raging enemy and whirling her to the door and out upon the landing.

Before Mrs. Biggs could recover herself, the Hindoo had re-entered the room and barricaded the door.

"If she wants the diamonds to-night let her take 'em," said Falla, composedly. "Don't fret, missy. It's all right. She's not sober, and not fit to take care of anything."

No further demonstration was made by Mrs. Biggs, who descended the stairs and flung herself in a lumbiring fashion upon her bed, where she dropped into a heavy slumber, which lasted through the long evening and through the night, until long after sunrise upon the following morning.

Her memory of her latest interview with Sinda was exceedingly indistinct. She hastened to prepare a breakfast and convey it to her new inmate. Falla

gave her admittance. Sinda appeared to have slept little during the night, but greeted Mrs. Biggs with a kindness of manner that was meant to make amends for the lack of affection.

The woman set down her tray and remarked that her son had not returned during the previous night, and that she purposed going in search of him, as she was anxious to remove at once, and, if left to himself, he might not return home for several days.

She hesitated, pausing near the door, with the intention of making another demand upon Sinda for her jewels, but the appearance of the Hindoo woman deterred her from putting her desire into words.

"I'd better wait until Simon comes," she thought. "They are both not agin giving me the stuns, and ther'll have to be a reg'lar pitched battle between us to get 'em, and Simon is that ugly hell scour the heathen to death but what he'll get 'em—so I'll wait."

She returned to the lower room and put on her bonnet and shawl and departed in quest of her son, resolving also to improve the opportunity of calling upon a real estate agent and looking over his list of eligible houses.

"I'll have a house engaged before I come back to this here nest," she said to herself. "And to-morrow we'll move, and I'll set up as a leddy."

She departed at once.

Old Falla watched from an upper window until her stout, ungainly figure had disappeared down the street, and then she said:

"Missy, you've eaten nothing this morning. I'll go out and get you something. You won't be anxious if I'm gone an hour or two, will you, my sweet? You see I don't know the neighbourhood and may not find my way readily."

"Do not go on my account, Falla," replied Sinda. "I do not care for food."

"And I want to buy some fine bed linen, such as my young mistress is used to sleep in," said Falla. "I can't forget that my lady has been a queen and that she is not used to these rough bedclothes."

The Hindoo did not wait for her to oppose her will, but hurried away upon her errands.

She had been gone but a few minutes when Sinda, oppressed with a sense of loneliness, descended the stairs to the garden, the house being unwholesome and repulsive to her.

The little yard possessed a solitary tree, a gnarled oak.

Sinda sat down upon its projecting roots, which, rising out of the ground, served as a seat.

She was sitting here, unconscious of the flight of time, absorbed in her own sad thoughts, when the garden-gate opened and Armand Elliot approached her.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

At sight of her lover in that dreary and desolate place, Sinda forgot that she had bidden him what she had intended to be an eternal farewell—she forgot the barriers between them—she was conscious only of an overwhelming joy and gladness, a mighty sense of relief, a great and unutterable thanksgiving. She rose up and stood, white and trembling, her eyes luminous as stars, unable to advance, yet unconsciously putting out both her hands in welcome to him.

It seemed to her ages since they had parted. Into the last twenty-four hours had been compressed for her more of misery and heart-break than falls to many in an entire lifetime.

"Armand!" she breathed.

"Sinda!" he cried, seizing her hands. "My poor darling! How white and worn you look! How you have suffered since you left Belle Isle!"

They stood for a moment with clasped hands, their hearts beating wildly, their pulses thrilling. The wretched little garden had suddenly become an Eden to them both.

There were no houses near, only a stretch of common on either side, and the road in front.

Elliot drew the girl to his breast and kissed her.

She released herself upon the instant, her pale face dyed with blushes as she suddenly remembered who and what she was, and the gulf that separated them.

"This is a complete surprise," she said, in a faltering voice. "Why, it is only a day since I left Belle Isle. How came you here, Armand?"

"I came on the train with you, Sinda," replied Elliot. "I followed you to this place last night to assure myself of your safety."

Sinda looked her amazement.

"Did you think I would let you go away alone with that strange woman?" inquired Elliot. "You do not know me, Sinda. My preparations were made over night to attend upon you unseen. I did not show myself upon the way to you, because I did not wish Mrs. Biggs to know of my surveillance—

and for other reasons. You were glad to see me, Sinda?"

Her eyes answered him.

"How you tremble!" said Elliot. "Sit down again, Sinda. Is Mrs. Biggs at home?"

"No, she has gone to look for her son, who has not been here since our arrival."

"Where is Falla?" asked Elliot, glancing in the direction of the cottage.

"She has gone out to make some purchases."

"And has left you here alone?"

The girl assented.

"That was not wise. It was not like Falla," exclaimed Elliot. "She must have had some important purpose to take her from you, leaving you in this lonely neighbourhood unguarded. But fate has been kind to me in permitting me an interview with you, Sinda. I had feared that Mrs. Biggs would not allow me to see you. Tell me of her, darling. Have you learned to regard her as your mother?"

"No," answered the girl mournfully. "I never can love her, Armand; worst of all, I cannot even respect her. She is so coarse and brutal. I was brought up so carefully, you know. Mr. Hudspeth was an English gentleman, used to stately English drawing-rooms, and his companionship was in itself an education to me. And I can't get used to Mrs. Biggs, Armand, and I shrink from her with actual loathing. I never knew any one like her. I have always thought that my failure to remember my early life was something to regret. I regret my loss of memory no longer," she added, with an intense bitterness.

"My poor Sinda! Why should you remain with her then? Let me take you away with me this morning—now. Let us return to Belle Isle by the first train," urged the passionate young lover.

Sinda shivered.

"No, I cannot go there," she said.

"The earl will welcome you as a daughter, Sinda. He loves you, and will defend you even against this woman—"

"My mother! We must remember that, Armand; she is my mother. The earl is kind, but I cannot go back to Belle Isle."

"May is perhaps not kind," said Elliot, gravely.

"Do you think I have been blind, my darling? Do you think that I have not seen her hatred of you, her envy, her jealousy?—that I have not heard her veiled insults, and wondered at your long suffering, your generous forbearance towards her? I will take you back to Belle Isle, Sinda, as my wife. Say that you will marry me to-day. Say that I may go for our marriage licence!"

"It cannot be, Armand. If you can forget my origin, I cannot. Mrs. Biggs would prove a vampire; she would vaunt her relationship; she would mortify you beyond endurance, and you would be despised for your weakness and folly in marrying the daughter of a washerwoman. No, Armand, do not urge me. I must be firm. Leave me to myself and to her. Vile as she is, she is my mother."

The girl bowed her proud young head in an agony of shame as she uttered the words. The sacred name of mother applied to Mrs. Biggs seemed a desecration and a mockery.

Elliot argued his cause with all the eloquence of which he was master, but he could not shake Sinda's resolve.

"You send me forth alone," he said, at length. "Do you utterly refuse to go with me?"

"I must refuse, Armand."

"I will not give you up. I will await your own good time, Sinda. I know that sooner or later you will fly to my heart as to a safe refuge. I must be content to wait," and he sighed. "Yet I am her, Sinda, that I could buy off this Mrs. Biggs and her son."

"It is better that you should leave me to myself and to them, Armand. If I am one of them by birth I belong to them, and should remain with them. Do not urge me further. I must keep to my ideas of duty, mistaken although they may be. I am not fit to be your wife. Give me up. Forget me."

"Never! I shall watch over you, Sinda, and whenever you may be I shall be near. I fear those people. Mrs. Biggs has no love for you. The woman who could abandon her little child at the time of the mutiny, and seek her own safety, is likely to sacrifice that child again for her own selfish advancement. You need a friend; I will be that friend. When danger is near, for I am sure that danger will come to you, I shall be at hand. And I will wait, Sinda, in all love and patience until you are willing to be my wife!"

His earnestness, his great and passionate love, which could yet be as patient as death, thrilled the girl anew with a great sorrow.

She could not tell him of her misgivings as to her future; she could not tell him that Mrs. Biggs had been intoxicated upon the previous night; and yet

she longed to make it clear to him that even friendship between him and herself was impossible. They must part for ever, without further hope or thought of meeting, for such seemed to Sinda to be the wisest course.

The time slipped away during their discussion, and nearly three hours had passed when the Hindoo woman was seen coming up the street, tall and gaunt, and lithe of tread, yet heavily laden with parcels. As she entered the yard, Elliot took his leave, Sinda having begged him to go before Mrs. Biggs should return.

Old Falla was full of exclamations and inquiries concerning Elliot's appearance at Penkern when he had been supposed to be still in Cornwall, and Sinda explained the manner of his arrival. The two re-entered the house together. The Hindoo woman had procured some fine bed linen and some delicate articles of food, and her first act was to brew some tea and prepare a luncheon for her young mistress.

The day had drawn near its close before Mrs. Biggs returned. She came in high good humour, exhilarated with beer and with the fact that she had seen a house which precisely suited her, and which was to be let furnished at a high price, payable quarterly in advance. She had determined to take the house, and was to call upon the following morning to take her lease and pay a quarter's rent.

"They took me for the overseer of the jeddy as wanted it," she said, good-naturedly, "and I let 'em think so, for they won't know me to-morrow in the fine clothes I shall wear. I couldn't find Simon, but I left word for him at a place as he often goes to, which I know he'll be home this evening. And tomorrow we shall go to Haigh Lodge, and I shall be a lady!"

"You will need money to take the house and to procure a wardrobe, madam," said Sinda, gently. "Let me place my purse in your hands." Use its contents as you may choose."

Sinda had had in her possession over a thousand pounds; still new and unused.

The surplus she had retained, but the larger sum which we have mentioned was stored in her portmanteau, and she now placed it in Mrs. Biggs' hands, stating the amount.

The woman was overcome with delight, and spoke her satisfaction in warm terms.

Then her face clouded over, and she put the money in her bosom, saying:

"You need not tell Simon about this. And now give me the jewels."

"I have given you the money so that I may keep the jewels," declared Sinda. "I cannot give them up. But should you need more money, I will divide my jewels with you, giving you half."

"I want all—I will have all!" cried Mrs. Biggs. "Just you wait. We'll see!"

When evening came on the woman began to look for her son.

Old Falla barricaded Sinda's door and put her young mistress to bed, resolving to be watchful and wakeful.

Somewhere about midnight a loud knocking was heard upon the cottage door, and Mrs. Biggs undid the fastenings, giving admission to her son.

A light was burning in the living-room, and Mrs. Biggs led the way thither, her son following.

He was a burly, ruffianly-looking man, of some five or six-and-twenty years, a coarse, brutal fellow, with a bullet-shaped head, a bull-neck, and ugly features, a man to be feared and shunned upon a lonely road at night by a person with money, one would say.

"What do you want with me, old woman?" he demanded, harshly, halting in the centre of the room. "Is it money this time, eh? It's always money—"

"It's not money, Simon," interrupted Mrs. Biggs, in garrulous delight. "I'm rich. I've got a thousand pounds of my own—"

"You're crazy!" cried the son.

"No, I'm not. And what do you think? Simon has happened? Who do you think is upstairs in your old room, hoy?"

"Blest if I know."

"Your sister, Simon!"

"The old woman's crazy, sure enough."

"Your sister, Rhedy, as I thought was killed at Sawpunt," cried Mrs. Biggs, excitedly, "but which she lived, and was carried off by a Sepoy, which was made a Begum, or a queen, and has a bushel of jools, all in her trunk upstairs, at this blessed minute, and too selfish to give her own ma—"

Simon Biggs interrupted his mother with an oath and a demand to know what she meant.

Thereupon Mrs. Biggs more calmly told the story of the advertisement she had seen in the "Telegraph" newspaper, of her trip to Cornwall, and of her return with Sinda and her Hindoo servant.

"It's all like a fairy pantomime, blest if it ain't."

equivalent Simon Biggs. "Where's your thousand pounds?"

"Up in the trunk along of the jeols," responded Mrs. Biggs, with returning frankness. "And there's a great fortune there in shinin' stuns, enough to make you and me rich for life, Simon. But that there old heathen refuses to give up the keys, that she do, and Rhody is set, too!"

"I've got keys as'll open the trunk, said Simon. "We'll leave it till mornin', and then we'll show Rhody who's her lawful guardines. Half the stuns is mine, old woman. Fair play, you know. Now get me a supper and I'll go to bed!"

A supper of cold meat and bread was placed before him, and he devoured it while his mother expatiated upon Sinda's past glories and her wealth, and upon her own future. The meal concluded, Simon arose, saying:

"I'll turn into the back room upstairs to-night. We'll let the jools slide till morning. I'm impatient to see the gal. If she's pretty who may be of use to me. We'll see."

He took up the candle and the light fell full on his face. In its crafty lines, in his emanating eyes, the mother read a deep purpose. She watched him ascend the room assigned him, and then muttered:

"He means to rob the girl to-night, and make off with the plunder, and sheet his own mother. We'll see to that. I'll get a head of him. I've a second key to Rhody's door. I'll push out her key and creep in and get the jools myself!"

She waited half an hour or more, until the cottage had grown still, and then, removing her shoes, she crept up the stairs softly to the door of Sinda's room.

(To be continued.)

giving new life to old scenes and old characters

and old scenes and old characters



[THE KING AND THE PEASANT MAID.]

A DAY DREAM.

A GREAT gray kitchen, gray, for it was night, and two candles; a smell of herbs drying somewhere; a cat on the hearth; a soft, warm breeze coming in from the windows; the sound of rustling leaves; a country maiden reading a book, whose yellow pages smell of age; a handsome peasant listening.

There's a picture for you. Ralph, his name—Maud, hers.

"And so," read Maud, preparing to shut the old book, "the king and queen lived happily for ever after."

Maud was a merry girl, and the village teacher. She gave the farmer's children lessons in spelling and arithmetic.

Her own store of knowledge was somewhat limited.

Ralph used to watch her as she sat, her bright brown hair tucked behind a little cap, her blue eyes tender with feeling, and her rosy lips parted often in smiles.

Ralph himself was no mean specimen of manhood. He was tall, broad-shouldered, with a pleasant countenance and the best of hearts.

He had but one failing, he was too fond of the tap-room, and it promised to be a growing evil with him.

"I wish I was a king," said Ralph, one night, after his attention had been chained by a glowing story.

"You are happier as you are, Ralph," returned Maud.

"Oh! no; I don't like work—that is, work that wears one out and makes one so tired," was his reply. "Kings must be blessed mortals—free from all care—no one to say them nay—no work to do—

all pleasure, all happiness—yes, I wish I was a king."

Maud looked at him, and he did not see her, for his eyes were building castles, and his face was in the shadow.

Maud admired him in silence. "What a beautiful head he has got!" she thought to herself, "and what long lashes!"

Then poor Maud sighed, for she did not like to think.

The next day, busy at his hoeing, with perhaps a little pain in his good, broad shoulders, he said again:

"Yes, I wish I was a king. It seems to me I was not born to be a farmer. How tiresome it is to hoe! It makes one hungry too. Well, dinner will soon be ready, and then—I shall have greens, and beef, and dumplings, while kings live on the fat of the land—aye! and the ocean too."

Prominently the horn sounded. Ralph hastened to obey it.

He met Maud, who held his little brother and sister by the hand.

"How tired and heated you look!" she said.

"Yes, I'm both," he replied.

"Still want to be a king, I suppose?" she said, archly.

"Yes, indeed. I wish I was a king," he answered.

"Poor Ralph!" she said, pitifully, and passed on.

The great kitchen looked cool, for the floor had been washed and sanded.

The board was spread with sweet bread, home-made, and godly rows of smoking dishes. Ralph washed his face in a great pan of cold water, and for a moment felt grateful and refreshed. But still he was not happy, not even with the pretty face of Maud smiling opposite.

"It is nothing for you to sit in a cool room and teach the children," he said, after dinner, in reply to some remark.

"If you were to try it once," she said, good-humouredly, "you would want to get back to your potato hoeing."

"What, is it really hard work, then?" he asked again.

"It is not easy by any means," was the reply.

"But you always look as if you were easy enough."

"Because I have learned to be contented," was the reply.

The answer echoed in Ralph's brain as he walked off; but for all that he did not stop wishing that he was a king.

That afternoon he paid a visit to the tap-room. It was very sultry, and, as he sat in the pleasant apartment, he thought the beer never tasted better.

Suddenly, as he was raising the mug to his lips, there appeared a grotesque face on the top, and as it looked at him it winked and smiled mysteriously. As Ralph gazed in wonderment the face grinned more broadly, and said with quick words and sharp voice:

"Want to be a king?"

"Yes," said Ralph.

"Set me down then and wait," was the response.

He set the mug down and closed the lid. A strange feeling came over him.

He was helpless, but felt himself lifted and borne aloft.

It was not long before consciousness came back to him.

He opened his eyes—his wish was granted—he was a king.

What splendours surrounded him! He was lying on a stately couch, all gold and silver and delicate network.

The morning seemed to have dawned, and yet there was no stir in the royal household.

As far as he could see he was dazzled. Chairs of velvet, gilded and carved, chairs of silk and satin, pictures behind hangings of crimson lustre, ornaments exquisitely fashioned, all beauty and profusion.

He lay there wondering dreamily until a silvery sound smote his ear.

In a few minutes his courtiers surrounded him, each seemingly ready to assist him.

"Well, this is not very pleasant, not to be master of one's own limbs," he said to himself, as one placed this garment, and another that, so that-by the time he was dressed he was so weary that his frame the ached with the endless pulls and pushings; he did not feel like a free man.

Besides he had a sense of weariness which he could not account for, a dull pain in the head which was very hard to bear, and a sensation of great fatigue.

"Your majesty must have ridden too hard yesterday," said one of the courtiers.

"Your majesty drank wine too late at supper, last night," said another.

He sat down to a sumptuous service alone, his courtiers ranged around him.

A glass of wine was poured out.

Suddenly, as he raised it to his lips, he shuddered.

An unearthly thrill ran through him.

"Bring the taster," he cried, as from some new impulse.

A slender, beautiful youth came near—he tasted the wine—he turned pale, staggered, and was borne away.

The wine was poisoned.

"If this is one of the penalties of station," said the king to himself, "I had rather go back to my ploughing;" but the matter was not so easy; a king he was, and a king he must be till he had thoroughly learned the lessons of royalty.

Why should I give the day's experience, save to say that at night he was a jaded and worn-out king?

And as he possessed a double consciousness, he wished from his heart that he could go back to the old farm and hoe potatoes again.

A hunt was arranged for the next day; that the king thought might be a source of some pleasure; at any rate, the hedge of etiquette by which he was environed would be somewhat broken down.

They were off as early as strict court rules would allow, and the king felt a wonderfully exhilarating influence as the cool wind blew across his temples, and he saw the early dew glistening on the hills and the fields.

They passed a little school-house. In the doorway stood Maud, looking like a bright rose. The king scanned her curiously.

Surely he had never half noticed her before.

He stopped, smiled, when she turned away, her cheek blanching, and hurried within the school-room.

"Are even the innocent girls afraid of me?" thought the king. "My reputation must have been

a bad one. Well, I'll not force her to notice me; of course she doesn't know—how should she! But I declare, I never saw that Maud was so pretty before. There isn't a lady at the court so fresh and handsome."

Presently they were away off chasing the deer. "Well, this is fine sport," thought the king; "after all, it isn't so bad to be at the head of a great nation, if we can once in a while have such pleasure as this. What! ho?—what is the matter here?" he cried out, as the man next to him, an officer, reeled and fell from his saddle.

They picked him up and examined him sorrowfully. The man was dead. There was, however, a shout heard not far off—they had found the murderer and brought him forward.

"What didst thou do this for?" questioned the king, angrily.

"The arrow was designed for thyself," replied the forester.

"Hear him!" shouted the king, his anger stirred; "take him away and have him dealt with. We'll have thee broken on the wheel, sirrah."

"If I had only performed my mission I should not have cared," cried the audacious fellow.

And now the king was in misery all the time. He started at a shadow, almost at a tree, thinking it might be an assassin; he looked warily round upon his courtiers. In more than one face he read treachery, and their fawning manners disgusted him.

"Truly there is no safety out of one's station," he said, mournfully. "Would I were Ralph, the farmer's boy, again."

A week passed by, and they wanted him to marry.

"Whom shall I have?" he said, partly to himself; but one of his ministers heard him and stopped before him.

"May it please your majesty," he said, "proposals have been sent from the King of Spain, who wishes an alliance formed between your majesty and her royal highness."

The king listened astonished.

"But we have never seen her," he said; and then the prime minister went into a long discussion concerning reasons of state, till the king was weary and nearly fell asleep. "Plague take all kingdoms," he thought to himself, "if these are the trials that beset the man who sits on a throne. They won't even let me marry whom I please. Not content with dressing me, feeding me, trying to poison and to shoot me, they must needs put a wife beside me whom I don't know, or care anything about. I won't be led by the nose in this way, if I am a king."

So he thought of a plan which was to disguise himself, and take a journey to Spain that he might see his future wife for himself.

"And if I don't like her," he said, "nothing shall force me to have her."

He had not ridden a mile with his attendants on his journey, before he met a procession.

He had forgotten that it was May day, and here were the village maids turned out to celebrate the happy time.

Leading them was Maud, as Queen of May. Did she ever look so pretty before? Her kirtle snow-white, her cap replaced by a little hat of chif, from under which hung her beautiful brown curls, and on which was placed a lovely wreath of newly-opened roses.

"That is one of the prettiest creatures I have ever seen," said a courtier to the king.

But his majesty was pale and moody.

He had felt his heart bound at the sight of dear Maud, sweet Maud, whose hand he had taken so often in his own without one quickening pulse, and he was angry that he had not noticed her charms before.

The impulse was strong upon him to call her by her name, when he first saw her; but he thought of his new position, of his courtiers seated beside him, and the proceeding seemed undignified.

As he went on his way, however, he sighed so frequently as to attract the notice of his attendants, who smiled at each other, but wisely kept their opinions to themselves.

The king was utterly disgusted at the sight of his Spanish fiancee. He found her high-nosed, thick-lipped, and merciless with her tongue.

Be it known that she took pains to appear to the least possible advantage, because she had some little project of her own in hand, which this marriage would effectually break up.

"I don't like her," said the king.

"But reasons of state?"

"Hang your reasons of state!" cried he, like a bluff, jolly farmer; "I tell you I won't have her, and there's an end of the matter!"

In vain the chief advisers talked of policy, of defeat, of the thousand and one things that might happen.

He turned a deaf ear to it all, for there was but one image in his thoughts—that of pretty Maud, the May Queen.

"I'll have her or none," he said to himself. After awhile, however, his ministers and courtiers teased him so, that he reluctantly gave them a hope that ultimately he might accede to their wishes.

Meantime he had as much as he could do to keep on the alert against those he was sure were thirsting for his life.

His head was filled with state papers, petitions, and the many cares that he was too conscientious to throw off. Only once he descended from his dignity, and managed to escape the notice of the jealous eyes watching him on every side; and, in disguise, he went shyly into the town where was the homestead of a farmer he had called his father.

Breathlessly he stood at the window of the little school-room.

There was no one there, for the scholars had been dismissed.

There was her seat, however. There was her desk with her inkstand on it, and the pen she had used.

There was her little black silk apron hanging upon a nail.

Oh! how mute but suggestive were all these things! They spoke of her presence. Should he go farther?

Yes, he must see Maud; so off he went, and was passing that identical potato-patch, when he saw a sight that almost turned him into stone.

There, under the shadow of the old apple tree that stood alone in the field, sat Maud, leaning against the trunk; while, bending over her, with a world of love in his dark eyes, stood the counterpart of himself, Ralph, the farmer's boy, talking.

Then Maud looked up, her gray eyes beaming with happiness.

The sight filled the poor king with rage. He hurried back like a madman, anathematizing himself for his foolishness in giving up the real for imaginary happiness.

He declared he would have Maud, the school-mistress, before any high-born lady in the land; and he gave orders, secretly, that she should be captured and brought to the palace.

This was easily done, for in those days the word of a king was law in such cases, and men dared not sue for justice.

The pretty, innocent Maud was taken from her school and forced away she knew not whither.

Half-frightened, she was set down by the king's palace, and then conveyed by a private entrance to one of the most magnificent apartments in the whole mansion.

As she stood there, pale, indignant, frightened, yet wondering at the splendours on every hand, several persons attired with the utmost elegance entered, bearing caskets on salvers, which they deposited on ivory tables.

Then came women also habited regally, holding rich brocades embroidered with jewels. These they spread out till every couch gleamed with rare and sparkling beauty.

But poor Maud stood restless, excited, and unhappy.

What did all these shows mean? All the horrible things which she had read thronged her imagination; she trembled, and tears filled her eyes.

Presently she heard soft music, then doors opened, and the king, magnificently apparelled, entered. Maud started back with fear in her looks, but his majesty gently advanced.

"Sweet maiden," he said, "those who have found favour in the king's eyes should not shrink in his presence. We have long known your virtues, and often dwelt upon your beauty. Come, therefore, and share our throne, for we offer you honourable marriage."

Abashed, surprised, Maud stood looking upon him in strange bewilderment. The king woo her, the peasant's daughter? Impossible; she must be dreaming.

"Oh! your majesty, let me go home," she cried, imploredly. "I am but a simple peasant girl, who, having through favour received a better education than falls to the lot of my peers, your majesty may think deserving of greater favour. But, I assure you, I have no wish to leave my humble home—my lowly lot contents me."

"Your words but make me more desirous to call you mine," replied the king, trembling now with eagerness and fear. "I know your station and your modesty enhances your worth. My word is law, and it has gone forth that the beautiful Maud, the sweetest maiden in all the kingdom, shall be my lawful queen."

"Oh, most gracious sire," cried Maud, her face growing white, "you surely will not put such an edict

into effect without my sanction. Consider that every maiden should have the right of disposing of herself, and I—I am—"

The colour had rushed back to her cheek; her eyes were downcast.

The king waited frowningly; she looking up and seeing no mercy, ran and threw herself at his feet.

"Oh! your majesty," she cried, and her voice was choked with tears and maiden shame, "my word has passed. I love and am betrothed to an honest farmer; I would rather be his wife than a queen. Do not force me to be miserable—to break Ralph's heart—oh! sire, be merciful—be merciful!"

The king turned his face away.

He was half-crazed with anger at his own folly—with his passion.

Yet how could he resist that gentle voice, those pleading eyes, and be a man?

He raised her, and before speaking threw open the lids of the boxes that stood before her.

She started back almost blinded with the brilliance of costly gems, diamonds, and precious stones, a wondrous collection.

"Maud, these shall be yours—they are fitting for my queen—these fabrics," and he pointed to the brocades, and tissues, and laces, "you will reign supreme in the heart that adores you; my half of my throne shall be yours; the hearts of millions; for all will love you. Maud, do not drive me to despair; seldom has monarch so pleaded."

But she stood steadfast.

"I do not prize the splendours, the jewels, or the throne," she said, with a tremulous sweetness, "so much as one word from my Ralph. Oh! sire, do not detain me, he is breaking my heart at my absence," and she wept bitterly.

The king grew hard, relentless, and cruel. His very soul rebelled; murder was in his thoughts, for he hated the man she loved.

"No," he thundered—"no, again no! You are here, you are in my power, and here you shall stay." A scream so shrill pierced his brain that, rubbing his eyes violently, Ralph found himself sitting upright on the hard bench in the tap-room, and saw the bar-maid laughing at the top of her voice.

"Such a skirmishing as ye must ha' been into!" she cried, as soon as she could regain her gravity. "What ha' ye been dreaming about, a fight or a bargain? Oh! it was sport to see ye;" and again she relapsed into a wilder peal of laughter.

Very slowly Ralph regained his scattered senses; but in his strange dream he had gained a new, a delicious experience.

For when, as he neared his father's house, he met Maud coming from her school, his sleepy eyes grew bright with pleasure.

She, looking down, only said:

"Oh! Ralph, you have been to the tap-room again."

"Only promise me you'll love me, Maud, and I'll promise never to go in the tap-room again, Maud?"

She looked up.

He remembered that glance—he had seen it in his dream—he knew now what she had known for a long, long time, that she loved him.

Maud often wondered afterward at Ralph's fluency upon the subject of kings and queens, but he did not tell her his dream till long after they were married.

M. A. D.

IRONING.

Cover the table or dresser with a coarse ironing flannel, doubled, or a piece of old blanket. Stretch over it some clean old sheeting, fastened to the table at the corners with flat-headed brass nails. Have at hand a basin of clean water, to dampen out any folds that may have been badly ironed. Rubbers and iron-holders should be scrupulously clean.

A knife board sprinkled with bath brick, is the cleanest mode of polishing flatirons.

The heat and size of the iron should be regulated according to the articles to be ironed. Flannels require a heavy, cool iron, and calico scorches with less heat than linen.

The plain linen articles should be ironed first, and hung to air, whilst the lighter materials are in hand. Muslins and net require ironing twice, being gently pulled every way of the thread between each ironing. Embroidered muslins should be ironed over several thicknesses of flannel.

As a general rule, all fine muslin work is better first ironed through a piece of old thin cambric; this prevents scorching, and also clears the muslin from the starch.

Gentlemen's linen fronts and cuffs should always have the iron first passed over them in this manner.

BIRDS' NESTING IN SCOTLAND.

To the westward from John O'Groats is seen the Hoy Head, which is, I believe, one of the highest cliffs in Scotland. It is said to be 1,100 feet high. St. Paul's is 404 feet high, consequently the height of this fearful cliff is nearly three times higher than St. Paul's.

A story has been told of an eagle's nest having been discovered far down a cliff somewhere in this neighbourhood.

The sum of a guinea each was offered for the eggs; an Orkney man, determined to gain the prize, made a rope of heather, fastened his wife to the end, and let her down to rob the eagle's nest of the eggs; the young woman, when at the nest, was no less than forty fathoms down, or thirty-eight feet higher than the Monument, from the top of the cliff.

The rope was made of heather; as the clever wife suggested, if made of ordinary hemp it might chafe or even catch fire with the weight, by the friction against the projections of rock. This young woman performed this perilous feat of birds' nesting with success, and sold her eggs at the price offered.

This adventurous pair are said to have collected, with their heather rope, a dozen eagles' eggs one season.

Mr. Reid informed me of a sad accident that took place not long ago. A man was after eagles' eggs; his foot slipped, and he fell from a terrible height, and was dashed to pieces.

Mr. Dunbar informed me that sixty eagles had been killed in the island of Lewis in seven or eight years, and that there were about seventy breeding places patronised more or less by eagles in Sutherlandshire.

He thinks it impossible to exterminate eagles altogether, as there are so many breeding places inaccessible to human beings.

As a grouse preserver Dunbar does not like eagles, he considers that an eagle kills one of his grouse every day.

In the Orkneys peregrines breed, and I have now a very nice specimen kindly sent to me by a gentleman who has the shootings near John O'Groats. The great Squa gull breeds in the northern Orkneys and Shetland.

Mr. Reid informs me that when he was living at Kirkwall a Demoiselle crane—(of all birds in the world)—was shot in the Orkneys. He was, of course, most anxious to obtain the specimen, but he was just too late to get it, as the man who had shot the bird had picked off its feathers and made it into soup.

Mr. Reid also told me a very funny story of the artfulness of common chickens. In former days it was difficult for visitors to get anything to eat at John O'Groats, there being no butchers nor bakers within miles.

When visitors arrived it was the custom of the proprietor of the little inn to chase and catch a chicken, pluck, and roast him at once for a visitor's dinner.

In course of time the chickens became very artful.

They kept a sharp look out, and when they saw a carriage coming along the road—they could see a long way down the straight road from the inn—they bolted, as the French would have it, à toutes jambes—with all legs—into the heather, and did not reappear until the visitors had eaten their bacon without the chicken and taken their departure. That birds will learn from experience is quite certain.

Mr. Dunbar informed me that when the telegraph wires were first put up between Berrydale and Hemdale, the grouse were continually flying against the wires and killing themselves, and in one season the driver of the mail cart picked up no less than forty brace of grouse that had been so killed. Of late years not a grouse has been found killed by the telegraph wires. They seem to have passed on the warning that telegraph wires were dangerous.

F. B.

SIMPLICITY OF DRESS.

FEMALE loveliness never appears to so good advantage as when set off with simplicity of dress.

No artist ever decks his angels with feathers and gaudy jewelry; and our dear human angels, if they would make good their title to that name, should carefully avoid ornaments which properly belong to Indian squaws and African princesses. These timbrelies may serve to give effect on the stage, but in daily life there is no substitute for the charm of simplicity.

A vulgar taste is not to be disguised by gold and diamonds. The absence of a true taste and real refinement of delicacy, cannot be compensated for by the possession of the most princely fortune.

Mind measures gold, but gold cannot measure mind. Through dress the mind may be read, as through the defects those the letter page.

A modest woman will dress modestly; and a really refined and intellectual woman will bear the marks of careful selection and faultless taste.

FAUCETIE.

"AS OTHERS SEE US!"

WAITER: "Inside slice of cheddar, please sir."

PROPRIETOR: "Tell the gent as how I ain't got no inside for myself."

—Fun.

A HANSOM OFFER.

OLD GENT: "Hi, hi! Hoy, you blackguard! Take me up! You're bound to take me up! Hi! take me to the nearest police-station!"

POLICEMAN (anxious for a change): "No need to hapeal to 'im, sir; I'll do it, sir. I'll take ye ther, and be glad of the job."

—Fun.

PUT OUT THE TAPER.

THE body of an infant with a red tape round its neck was found the other day near Newbury. This is a decided advance on the custom some ladies have of leaving their offspring about naked. To argue with a coroner that the necktie killed the young party would be waste of lime. What Government official would allow that red tape ever killed anybody—except Government officials?

—Fun.

There is a good reason why a little man should never marry a bouncing widow. He might be called "the widow's mite."

A CERTAIN physician at sea made great use of sea-water among his patients.

Whatever disease came on, a dose of the nauseating liquid was first poured down. In process of time the doctor fell overboard.

A great bustle consequently ensued on board, in the midst of which the captain came up and anxiously inquired the cause.

"Oh, nothing, sir," answered a tar, "only the doctor has fallen into his medicine chest."

ENFANTS TERRIBLE.—Woolwich Infants.

—Punch.

A BOY of twelve, dining at his uncle's, made such good dinner that his aunt observed:

"Johnny, you appear to eat well!"

"Yes, aunty," replied the urchin; "I've been practising eating all my life."

QUESTION.

As the time is swiftly speeding,
Time for Peace's interceding,
And for Mercy's pleading
'Gainst the tug of war,
We would ask, Is ours the Crescent?
Or is ours the Christian peasant?
In our action at the present
Which is England for?

As a war exterminating
In its action is but waiting
Till the confessional prating
Makes a patch-work sew;
As, in spite of intercessions,
War must follow on aggressions,
What becomes of our professions?
What will England do?

—Fun.

RHYMES FOR TIMES.

MHM. for a poet who wants a verse:
When a man's christened he wants a nurse;
When he is married he wants a parson;
When he is buried he wants a hearse. —Fun.

AN ICE IDEA.

The Mayor of Portsmouth is to give a banquet to the officers of the Arctic Expedition. To give it a representative character it will consist entirely of articles of food and drink.

—Fun.

"FUDGE!"

ORDERS have been given by the Czar for the mobilisation of part of the Russian army.

Prince Gortschakoff, in a circular to the Russian representatives abroad, explaining the measure, gives his reason for this course, viz.:

"That the Czar does not desire war."

A motive which agrees so admirably with the step Prince Gortschakoff has undertaken to explain will doubtless (?) be considered satisfactory by the Powers of Europe; but one or two other reasons (equally

likely to be true) are here given, which will, of course, be as much believed as the first.

The Russian army, then, has been put upon a war footing.

Because the Czar has no idea of going to war.

Because he desires peace above all else in the world.

Because it causes the Russians to be mobilised.

Because it causes the Czar to mobilise them.

Because the Turkish armies are disbanded, and the Turkish soldiers gone to their homes.

Because the Russian soldiers have all new greatcoats, and the Czar wants to see how they fit.

Because the last Turkish bonds were not paid to the English bondholders.

Because the Servians, "our brethren," are all heroes.

Because the English Arctic Expedition has not reached the North Pole.

Because the Sultan has a lot of wives, and the Czar has only one.

Because the territory provided over by the Czar of all the Russians is limited, and he is perfectly content with it.

Because Christmas is coming.

There are a few more reasons, equally cogent; but enough has, of course, been said to preclude any scepticism from using the expression immortalised in the "Vicar of Wakefield," and saying to Prince Gortschakoff and his Imperial Master:

"Fudge!" —Judy.

MISTRESS: "You're going to your brother's wed-

ding to day, aren't you, Martha?"

MARTHA: "Yes, ma'am, and I was a goin' to ast you 'm, if—. Yer see we're much of the same 'eighths,

an' figger, and complection, and style, as they say

—. If yer could lend me a gownd to go in!"

—Fun.

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.

BETTY: Beg pardon, my lord—but us was a mind to ax yer lordship for summat towards new satin' our little chapel yer."

MASTER OF FOXHOUNDS: "No, Betty! No-o-o-o, Betty! 'taint much in my line, 'No-o-o-o-o, Betty!'

BETTY (returning to the charge): "Beg pardon, my lord, but there was a litter o' foxes underneath this 'ere very floor last saxon, and us didn't disturb 'em."

M. F. H.: "Well, well! Betty, I'll send you a guinea—but mind and not disturb the foxes!"

—Fun.

DAUGHTER OF THE HOUSE (to her cousin): "Haven't you been down to supper before, Charles? I ask because we have only reckoned for one supper each!"

[Charles has not yet touched a morsel, but his fair companion is coming down to supper for the third time. Let us hope she takes the hint.] —Punch.

COMPANIONS IN ARMS.—Twins. —Punch.

OUR GROOMS.

MASTER: "Wish to go? What for, pray?"

STUD-GROOM: "Well, sir, you've been and bought two 'esses without my opinion—and from a party as has behaved very bad to me."

MASTER: "I suppose you mean you haven't made as much as usual by the 'deal'? You can go."

—Punch.

DARWINIAN.

ELDER SISTER (wishing to show off her small brother's accomplishments): "Now, Jack, who was the first man?"

JACK: "Adam!"

ELDER SISTER: "Quite right? And where did he live?"

JACK (who has notions of his own about an earthly paradise): "In the Z'logical Gardens!" —Punch.

GENERAL TCHERNIAEFF AND THE CZAR.

[ACCORDING to a telegram from Belgrade, the Russian Consul-General there has informed General Tcherniaeff that the Czar forbids him to return to Russia.]

When Tcherniaeff left Russian soil, the Servians to lead,

The Czar his journey never stayed by look, or word, or deed;

THE, beaten, back to Russian soil Tcherniaeff would repair,

He finds the Czar's decree says, "Make the Tcherniaeff you dare!" —Punch.

VIRTUOUS INDIGNATION.

BETTING MAN (to his partner): "Look 'ere, Joe! I 'ear you've been gamblin' on the Stock Exchange! Now, a man must draw the line somewhere; and if that kind of thing goes on, you and me will 'ave to part company!" —Punch.

SOLVING THE DIFFICULTY.

FIRST SOLDIER: "So they say we've a chance of fighting the Boosians ag'in!"

SECOND SOLDIER: "Blow the Boosians! Why don't we go and take Constantinople, and a'done with it?" —Punch.

ANTI-TURKISH ATROCITIES.

PARTIES there are on words who play,
And pun like graceless knaves.

The Servians are no Serfs, they say;

The Slavs will not be slaves. —Punch.

THE Khedive's Minister of Finance was reported to have died of over-drinking. He was in fact suffering from an over-dose of sack. —Punch.

ON THE 100-TON GUN.

THEY say that Armstrong's latest gun

In war will cause some dire fatality;

And England owns (now for a pun)

That Spessart has her Spezzia-ality.

Judy.

NOTICE TO MARINERS.

THE sort of vessel for the Irish Channel.—a potato-steamer.

ACCORDING to a Whitechapel paper, one of the Lord Mayor's footmen is so devout that he daily attends his Worship. —Judy.

A MERE DETAIL.

(SCENE: The corner of Wellington Street, Strand.)

CONDUCTOR: "Over the bridge, sir."

PLAYFUL PARTY: "No, thank you, I want to go across." —Judy.

A SINKING FUND.

WOULD-BE WAG (to old customer with highly-tinted nose): "A' say, chappie, hoo muckle-wid it tak' ta pent a neb like that o' yours?"

OLD CUSTOMER: "Weel, mun, a' couldna exactly say, as it's no just fooshin' yet!" —Judy.

WARM WORDS.

IMPREGNATED YOUTH: "Lend us five pounds. guv'nor, do! What's the good of you hoarding your money up—you can't take it with you?"

GUV'NOR: "Young man, it's as well for you that you can't—it would most surely melt in your pocket." —Fun.

HAPPY FORGETFULNESS.—At Woolwich, one Thomas Dalby was sentenced to a month's hard labour for stating on his enlistment into the 5th Fusiliers that he was unmarried, "whereas he had a wife and nine children." This is cruel. How can a man be expected to remember every little incident that has taken place during his life? Doubtless the man forgot all about it. But what an awakening! —Fun.

DECREE HIGH-SIGH.—A dejected lover writes to tell us that a certain young lady has indignantly rejected him, and desires to know if she can be committed for contempt of "court." —Fun.

IN-DEW-BITABLY SO.

SIXTENTH-YOUTH: "Ah, Anna Maria, you look to me like a daisy kissed with dew!"

GUILTY PARTY: "Oh, John! indeed—indeed it wasn't a Jew. It was that Tom Stubbs, and I told the idiot at the time, every one would find it out!" —Fun.

BEYOND COMBEARE.

VICAR'S DAUGHTER: "William Noakes, does your mother ever comb your hair?"

WILLIAM: "No, miss, nur o' doas' want 'er too, neither!"

V. D.: Why, you horrid boy?"

W. : "Why? 'Ces father 'e stoppont too late at the 'Three Tuns' 'other night, an' 'e's abed neaw with the combin' 'is gof!" —Fun.

THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENT.

MISTRESS: "Well, Bridget, is there a fire in my room?"

BRIDGET (a new importation): "Sure, mim, yis, there's a fire—but it's out." —Fun.

STATISTICS.

EXTENT OF RAILWAY TRACT.—There are in the world several thousand miles of railways; and supposing the two rails joined together to the extent of 25,000,000 miles they would reach quite round the earth, and would form an immense double ring when the two ends of the two rails were joined together.

If, then, a railway train of engine and carriages, with passengers, could be placed on these two rails, and kept travelling day and night, at the usual speed of railways (about thirty miles per hour), the train would, in rather more than a month, arrive at the same place that it started from; having gone completely round the earth in the opposite direction from that in which it set out. If it set out from the front of the station it would return at the back.

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.—M. Neumann, in the Austrian report of the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1867, states that the telegraphic lines in the whole world are 40,235 geographical miles long; there are in Europe 8,000 offices, and 4,000 in the other continents. It has been necessary to employ for the conducting wires 1,300,000 cwt. of iron; the expense of establishing all the lines is estimated at 416,000,000 francs.

We only become moral men when we accustom our affections and talents to be directed by reason.

Excess of ceremony shows a want of breeding. That civility is best which excludes all superfluous formality.

They who least shrink at the storms of fortune are always most virtuous and victorious in the end.

He is happy whose circumstances suit his temper; but he is more excellent who can suit his temper to any circumstances.

Had any wronged thee? Be bravely revenged; slight it, and the work is begun; forgive, and it is finished. He is below himself, that is not above an injury.

It is often better to have a great deal of harm happen to one than a little; a great deal may rouse you to remove what a little will only accustom you to endure.

They who are most impetuous in the pursuit of happiness usually meet with the severest disappointments. Happiness enters most freely into the mind which is the most tranquil in its desires.

TO A PINE TREE.

Ever since my infant eyes first saw the light,
The winds have waved thy green cockade
so high,
And o'er the summit of thy rocky height
Thy dusky form has loomed toward the sky

When blushing morn first shone above the land,
And night was slowly passing down the west,
Oft have I seen thee towering calm and grand—
A giant sentry on the hilltop's crest.

And in the holy hush of summer's eve,
When western breezes through thy branches blow,
The softest melodies will often breathe,
And o'er thy loving harpstrings sweetly flow.

When chilling Autumn strikes the forest ground,
And sweeps the emerald from each shrinking form,
Unchanged, above the mournful scene around,
Thy tower stands, and mocks the cutting storm.

When from his northern lair stern Winter comes,
And icy demons ride the speeding cloud,
Then, as Zephyrus sweeps above our homes,
Thy anthem sounds, still sweet, though wild and loud.

Thus, while the changing years have rolled along,
In pride of lonely grandeur thou hast stood:
And still, for years, Oh giant, free and strong!
Be it thy fate to reign o'er all the wood.

How blest the spirit that can fix its hold
Upon the highland of some purpose true,
And from this rocky-summit, firm and bold,
Reach upward in the spotless mental blue.

Then every breeze of thought that strikes the mind,
Sweet music in the tuneful soul shall wake;
For in this finer air, no breath unkind
The perfect melody of life can break.

And when the storm of strife destruction brings,
Or when dark sorrow chills the verdant land,
Though bleak despair shall spread her sable wings,
Such life still looms, majestic, calm and grand.

A. F. B.

GEMS.

THE beginning of anger is foolishness, and its end is repentance.

No man was ever so bad as his rivals and enemies thought him.

There's always one consolation, whatever our misfortune—it might be worse.

No man is happy without some delusions of some kind, as well as realities.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PLAIN BUNS.—Flour, two pounds; butter, a quarter of a pound; sugar, 6 ounces; a little salt, powdered caraway seeds, and ginger. Make a paste with yeast, four spoonfuls, and warm milk a sufficient quantity. A quarter of a pound of well washed currants may be added.

TO CLEAN CORAL.—Soak it in soda and water for some hours. Then make a lather of soap, and with a soft hairbrush rub the coral lightly, letting the brush enter all the interstices. Pour off the water and replenish it with clean constantly, and then let the coral dry in the sun.

QUINCE WINE.—Grate the best and ripest quinces just as for marmalade; strain the juice through a muslin bag, then carefully through a flannel one, and to every gallon of juice allow three pounds of loaf sugar; if liked very sweet allow four; stir well after adding the sugar; let it stand in jugs or kogs, filling up from another as it froths over; when quiet fill it; the longer it stands the more sparkling it becomes.

CRULLERS.—One cup of butter, two cups of white sugar, four eggs, one cup of milk, one teaspoonful of saleratus dissolved in milk, one teaspoonful of salt.

LEMON PIE.—Take two lemons, peel, and grate the rind; of the remainder express the juice and cut in small pieces; add one egg and one and a half soda crackers; water enough to fill the pie; sugar to taste.

MISCELLANEOUS.

RARA AVIS.—Recently we were shown a fine specimen of the "Sentinel butcher bird, or great grey shrike" (Lanius excubitor) which was found in this neighbourhood. The bird is nine and a half inches long and about fourteen inches broad. Upon the upper part of the body the plumage is of an uniform light grey; the upper side is pure white and a broad black stripe passes across the eyes. This species of shrike is found in almost every European country, but, we believe, has been rarely found in this neighbourhood. The bird may be seen at Mr. Waite's bird stuffer, Dunelm.

"The Mother of a Boy of Nine" writes to us: "I have just read in the 'Guardian' the following advertisement, to which I am anxious to call your attention: 'Wanted, by a widow lady, a person who is experienced in the art of whipping, and well qualified to administer a severe flogging with a new birch rod to two young children of the age of nine and ten. Wages thirty pounds per annum. The children are very wilful and troublesome.' If this be not a hoax (which at first sight seems not unlikely) it appears that one need not look further than our own country for 'atrocities.' Probably this lady is unacquainted with the story of Him who lived on earth a child, and whose example of gentleness and love we are all bound to follow."

Just now there is a splendid show of chrysanthemums in the Temple Gardens, and one particularly magnificent flower, pure white, and nearly as large as a sun-flower, is called the "Empress of India."

ACCORDING to the official returns of the proportion of inland telegrams to letters in various countries, it appears that to every 100,000 persons, one telegram to thirty-seven letters is received in Belgium; one to sixty-nine in Switzerland; and one to 121 in the United Kingdom.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
THE MIBER'S HIRE ... 121	THE LAST OF HER RACE ... 129
PUBLIC AMUSEMENT ... 124	A DAY DREAM ... 140
RICHARD PEMBERTON, OR, THE SELF-MADE JUDGE ... 125	IRONING ... 141
SCIENCE ... 127	BIRBS' NESTING IN SCOTLAND ... 142
SALVADOR DE TEC-SALME ... 127	SIMPLICITY OF DRESS ... 142
AN OVERKLEEN TIME-PYR ... 128	FACETIES ... 142
TOM WILSON'S VOW ... 128	STATISTICS ... 143
THE WIFE ... 128	GEMS ... 143
STREET TRAMS ... 128	HOUSEHOLD TALEA ... 149
FORGIVENESS ... 128	SEURS ... 149
A WEDDING GIFT ... 129	MISCELLANEOUS ... 150
HOW WE FLATTER OURSELVES ... 129	
CONSTANTINOPLE ... 130	EREBEN; OR, ONLY A GIFT, commenced in ... 675
HIS EVIL GENIUS ... 130	THE DIAMOND BRACELET commenced in ... 692
CLYTIE CHAMBOURNE; OR, BUILT UPON SAND ... 130	HIS EVIL GENIUS commenced in ... 700
LET THEM ALONE ... 130	CLYTIE CHAMBOURNE; OR, BUILT UPON SAND commenced in ... 704
THE DIAMOND BRACELET ... 130	THE MIBER'S HIRE commenced in ... 706
PENDULUMS ... 130	RICHARD PEMBERTON, OR, THE SELF-MADE JUDGE, commenced in ... 708
CHANGES IN LIFE ... 130	
THE BEST MEANS OF CULTIVATING THE CONVERSATIONAL POWERS ... 130	
A GOOD WIFE ... 130	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. T.—She is still your wife, though certainly a very bad one, if she is alive. You cannot marry another until a legal decision has safely divorced her from all claims on your protection.

E. G.—Freckles may be removed by bathing the skin in distilled elder-water, or using the honey-wash. The latter is prepared by mixing one ounce of honey with a pint of luke-warm water. It is used when cold.

Lewis.—The feet of women are not less susceptible to cold than those of men; calf or kid skin is best for winter. A rubber sole is good, but rubber shoes should be discarded altogether; they retain the perspiration, make the feet tender, and produce a great liability to cold.

G. W.—You are being tempted to your ruin. The wasp lurks among the flowers. Go to no more balls, and accept no more presents. Think of the future, and if you are blessed with parents think of them also.

NELLY.—To refrain from taking exercise is certainly conducive to corpulence; moderate walking exercise would no doubt have a contrary effect.

H. K.—Chocolate was first introduced into Europe from Mexico and the Brazils, about A.D. 1520. It is the flour or paste of the corva berry, and makes a wholesome beverage and a delicate confection. It was first sold in coffee-houses in 1650.

B. H.—Emperor is a superior title to Czar, because emperor implies authority over many States—and thus Alexander is styled emperor of all the Russians. The title "Czar" is improper as applied to that monarch, because there have only been two Caesars of Russia—Romanoff and his successor, Alexis. The word Czar is a Slavonian translation of the Tartar-Khan, or king. In the Russian Bible it constantly occurs in this sense, the Czar David being the ordinary term in use.

O. I.—The etiquette of the pathway, when two persons proceeding in different directions are about to pass, is for each to pass on the right hand of the other.

A. C.—Young men usually grow to the age of about twenty-one. Some grow till twenty-five, while others cease to grow at eighteen.

MARY.—Alter a wedding in a family, the cards of the newly-married pair are sent round to all their acquaintances, to apprise them of the event. The bridegroom forwards them to his acquaintances, and the parents of the bride to theirs. All cards left at the residence of the bride and bridegroom, during their absence in the "honeymoon," are acknowledged by them, on their return. Friends of the bride who reside at a distance, may write letters of congratulation, but not until after the "honeymoon." The simpler and more unaffected these epistles are, the warmer will be the thought the feeling that dictated them.

S.—Redness of the nose, in both sexes, is produced by inattention to the common rules for preserving health. With men, the bottle is the predisposing cause; with women, and especially young ones, tightening. An unnatural pressure on the waist and chest obstructs the circulation, and causes stagnation of the blood in that prominent and important feature, the nose. A young girl with a red nose is a very melancholy spectacle. The ill-natured shrug their shoulders, and whisper; those who know better regard her with deep concern, for they know she is rapidly hastening to an untimely grave.

NOVICE.—Much circumspection is required in what are "introductions." Good taste, common sense, and discernment are the best dictators of the etiquette to be observed, but a few leading rules are well established. One of them is, that people should never be introduced to each other without the previous understanding that it would be agreeable to both. Another is, when out walking with a friend, should you meet an acquaintance, never introduce him. Also, if you meet a male acquaintance with a lady on his arm, take off your hat to him; do not nod, for that would be disrespectful to the lady. In making introductions, present the person of the lower rank to him of the higher.

F. K.—The etiquette among gentlemen is always to return a salute. A lady is not obliged to return the bow of a gentleman, but if worthy of the honour, civility would demand a concession.

A.—You can obtain the material prepared of any artist's colourman.

ALY.—The manufacture is far too complicated for an amateur.

R.—Cover the surface of steel with soap, then write with aqua fortis.

MARY.—We think you are much too young to know whether you are really in love, and we think the lady also must be of the same opinion.

J. A.—Evidently she treats the matter very jocularly, and our opinion is when she meets with one more manly she will give you the slip. If you ever wish to stop it don't."

HARRY.—Yes.

W.—Cannot you start some little business that you can manage?

A.—A good test for poisonous paper-hangings is common spirits of balsam, or ammonia is a sure cure for arsenic. On application the beautiful but dangerous green turns to a blue. The existence of arsenic in rooms hung with green paper may also be detected immediately by lighting a bit of paper at a candle. When the paper is well lighted blow it out, then smell the smoke; if it contains arsenic the smell will be that of garlic.

SOPHIE.—We must warn you against any correspondence with such presumptuous and un næmmerally young men. Their addressing you at all was a gross breach of etiquette. Men who hover about boarding-schools are generally sharper. Inform your governess of the circumstance. Your "bosom friend" is a giddy girl.

HOME IS WHERE LOVE RULES.

Sunshine and shadow are ever together, thronging each day that ours is as flies; Good or ill fortune, foul and fair weather.

Comforts and cruishes, and gives and denies;

Some paths will be sweet, Some thorns pierce the feet,

While over all shadow and sunshine still meet.

Evil and good are the lot of poor mortals.

Both are as free as the morn's early dews, Which take we with us o'er the home portals, Roses or rue? Ours to take or refuse.

Oh, bridegroom and bride,

That first walk side by side,

With hands joined together, let your lives ne'er divide.

Better the dinner of herbs, with caresses,

Than the stalled ox, with contention and strife;

Narrow the room, but the love, broad, that blazes;

Narrow the room, yet joy may be rife.

Search life's richest vine

For the rubiest wine;

Only in sunlight sweetest juices combine.

Frosts of November earliest chill blooms outlying.

Gardens of sheltering warmth and fond care; Time's frost with home's sunshine is constantly vying,

Chilling first those remote from Love's cheering air.

Oh, speed the glad day,

When Love's regal sway

All homes shall illumine, while all hearts obey.

L. S. U.

TON M., ARTHUR M., and BEN L. would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. They are all good-looking, and well-educated. Respondents must be good-looking, and fond of home and children.

ETHEL and LOTTE, two sisters, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen, with a view to matrimony. Ethel is twenty, tall, light hair, and good-looking. Lotte is nineteen, medium height, auburn hair, and good-looking. Both are of loving dispositions, and thoroughly domesticated.

DELIA, dark complexion, would like to correspond with a young lady fond of home, with a view to matrimony.

DARING JACK and FLYING SCUD, two seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with two young ladies. Daring Jack is of medium height, blue eyes, and of a loving disposition. Flying Scud is tall and dark. Respondents must be about seventeen or eighteen, thoroughly domesticated, of a loving disposition and fond of home.

QUILL DRIVER and COXSWAIN OF THE DINGER, two friends, seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies.

HER, twenty-two, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a dark young gentleman.

CLARA and MILLY, two friends, wish to correspond with two respectable young gentlemen. Respondents must be tall. Clara is seventeen, dark hair and eyes. Milly is twenty-four, light hair, dark eyes, and fond of home and music.

H. N. would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. He is twenty-three, tall, and tolerably good-looking.

K. A., thirty-one, medium height, dark blue eyes, and considered good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady who would make a home comfortable and attractive.

A. G., nineteen, medium height, holds a good position, would like to correspond with a young lady about seventeen, good-tempered, and fond of home with a view to matrimony.

G. E. M., dark, good-looking, would like to correspond with a good-looking young lady, brown hair and blue eyes.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

HAPPY FACE is responded to by—William George C., fair, has blue eyes, tall, and thinks he is all she requires.

LAUGHING EYES by—T. A., dark, hazel eyes, fond of home.

HAPPY FACE by—W. A. J., fair, blue eyes, and fond of home.

WHITE MOSS ROSE by—S. A. L., thirty-three, with two children.

VIOLET by—William T., twenty-two, fair, medium height.

DAISY by—Charles W., twenty, fair, tall, considered good-looking.

ANNIE by—Sweet D., twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, blue eyes, auburn hair, good-looking, of a loving disposition.

LAURA by—Sweet William, nineteen, and dark complexion.

CHARLIE by—Louie, eighteen, tall, dark and fond of home.

REXUS by—Lily, twenty-four. Thinks he is all he requires.

DIAMOND STAR by—Grace, auburn hair, blue eyes, and fond of home.

HAPPY HARRIER by—Algernon. Thinks he is all she requires.

VIOLET by—Billy, dark hair and eyes.

DAISY by—David, fair complexion, considered good-looking.

ALFRED by—H. B., medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered good-looking, fair complexion, and of a loving disposition.

LAUGHING EYES by—Spanker Brails, about twenty-two, and fair.

HAPPY FACE by—F. M. G., medium height, dark complexion.

VIOLET by—A., twenty-two, medium height, and good-looking.

DAISY by—B., twenty-six, medium height, and good-looking.

HARVEY by—R.

TOSY by—Alex, seventeen. Would like to receive carte-de-visite.

GEORGE by—Annie, eighteen. Would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

I. F. by—Joe, a tradesman, twenty-eight, medium height, light brown hair, hazel eyes, considered good-looking.

EDWIN by—Jenny, seventeen, medium height, domesticated.

M. A. by—Daisy, eighteen, medium height, dark, light brown hair, brown eyes, fond of home and children, and domesticated.

NIMA by—R. B., seventeen, medium height, of a loving disposition.

TEDDY T. by—Rose, eighteen, hazel eyes, dark, fond of home, considered good-looking.

BILL by—Florence, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

EMILY by—M. M., twenty-one.

VIOLET by—Theseus, twenty-three, medium height, fair, fond of home and children.

DAISY by—Irin, twenty-one, tall, of a loving disposition.

ALF by—K., eighteen, tall, brown hair, brown eyes, and considered good-looking.

MARY by—Jem, twenty-four.

M. W. by—Emay, nineteen, brown hair, and fond of home.

TON by—W., seventeen, medium height, dark, brown hair.

MARY by—Alfred, nineteen, light hair, and considered good-looking.

PAGES by—A. W., twenty-five, tall, dark, and very handsome.

QUEY by—Milly.

ALF by—M. N., eighteen, good-tempered. Would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

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